

O P E N C H R I S T I A N P R E S S

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THE AGE

*Exposing Modern Deceptions, Counterfeit Christianity, and the Church's Captivity
to the Spirit of the Age*

P A R T I I

RECONSTRUCTING GOD, THE GOSPEL, AND HUMANITY

C H A P T E R 9

The Sexual Revolution and LGBT Christianity

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Abstract

This chapter examines the sexual revolution as a decisive embodiment of the transfer of moral authority from the Creator and Scripture to autonomous desire, psychological identity, and institutional affirmation. Building upon the preceding chapter's analysis of progressive hermeneutics, it argues that LGBT-affirming Christianity does not arise merely from disagreement over several isolated prohibitions. It requires a reconstructed account of creation, embodiment, marriage, sin, love, justice, holiness, repentance, pastoral care, and biblical authority. Through sustained exposition of [Genesis 1:26-28](#), [Genesis 2:18-25](#), [Matthew 19:3-12](#), [Romans 1:18-32](#), and [1 Corinthians 6:9-20](#), the chapter develops a biblical theology of sexuality grounded in creation, covenant, the fall, redemption, sanctification, and resurrection. It presents the strongest revisionist arguments concerning ancient exploitation, pederasty, temple prostitution, loving same-sex unions, Jesus' silence, inclusion, harm, mental health, and the alleged movement of the Spirit beyond apostolic teaching, then answers them biblically, historically, logically, and pastorally. Contemporary denominational developments, queer theology, psychological evidence, global legal divergence, African pressures, and institutional demands for affirmation are considered with careful qualification. The chapter also condemns violence, humiliation, coercive practices, and family abandonment, while rebuking pornography, fornication, adultery, abuse, unbiblical divorce, clerical misconduct, and conservative double standards. It concludes that human dignity requires protection, truth, compassion, and gospel hope, but not ecclesial blessing of what Scripture calls believers to surrender. In the last second before midnight, the church must recover sexual holiness, truthful community, repentance, mercy, and readiness for Christ's return.

Keywords: sexual revolution; LGBT Christianity; biblical sexuality; same-sex relationships; queer theology; Christian sexual ethics; rapture readiness

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When the Body Is Summoned to Testify

Chapter 8 ended in a courtroom. Scripture had been called as the accused, while experience, identity, academic theory, therapeutic preference, and cultural approval sat as judges. The present chapter moves from that courtroom into the body, because hermeneutical rebellion does not remain an abstract dispute among scholars. It eventually reaches skin, desire, marriage, loneliness, pleasure, shame, family, worship, and the words by which a person says, “This is who I am.”

The body is now summoned to testify, but its testimony is often admitted only after being translated by the sovereign self. Male and female embodiment may be treated as material awaiting interpretation rather than as created meaning. Desire may be received as an inner revelation. Psychological identity may be granted greater authority than anatomy. A relationship may be judged righteous primarily because it is sincere, consensual, emotionally sustaining, or socially recognised. The church is then asked not merely to protect people from violence or unjust discrimination, which it should do, but to certify a moral account of the person that Scripture does not permit.

This pressure rarely arrives by saying, “Reject God.” It arrives through serious moral concerns. People have been bullied, abandoned, assaulted, mocked, expelled from homes, humiliated in churches, exposed without consent, and treated as political symbols rather than neighbours. Some pastors have made careless promises that every unwanted attraction will quickly disappear. Some families have responded to disclosure with rage rather than tears, listening, prayer, and protection. Some churches have condemned same-sex relationships while hiding adultery, pornography, abuse, exploitation, and the sexual misconduct of influential leaders. In such environments, affirmation can appear not only compassionate but morally necessary.

The suffering is real. The proposed remedy must still be tested.

A physician who has seen patients harmed by cruel treatment must reject cruelty. He must not therefore declare every diagnosis false. A judge who has seen law misused must correct injustice. She must not therefore abolish truth. A church that has wounded people with Scripture must repent of its violence. It must not conclude that the healing of the wounded requires the editing of Scripture. Abuse of a boundary does not make every boundary abusive. Hypocrisy among defenders of marriage does not make marriage false. Hatred in the mouth of a conservative does not turn every progressive claim into love.

The controlling thesis of this chapter is therefore both welcoming and restrictive: the gospel welcomes every sinner without distinction, but it does not place any desire, appetite, identity, relationship, experience, or ideology beyond repentance, regeneration, sanctification, and the lordship of Jesus Christ. Human dignity requires love, truth, protection, and compassion. It does not require the church to bless what God has not blessed.

The central controversy is not whether Christians should love people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or by related terms. Christians are commanded to love every neighbour and every enemy. The controversy concerns what love means, who may define the human person, whether desire has moral authority, whether the body carries created meaning, whether Scripture may correct experience, and whether discipleship includes the surrender of sexual desires that conflict with God's revealed will.

This chapter must therefore walk between two cliffs. On one side lies revision, where compassion is redefined as agreement and the Word is made answerable to contemporary identity. On the other lies cruelty, where correct doctrine is wielded without tears, self-examination, patience, or protection of the vulnerable. The narrow path is not compromise between truth and error. It is truth spoken in love by people who know that the same Word judges them.

The church does not stand over this subject as a company of the sexually innocent. It stands as a people rescued from many forms of impurity. Paul wrote to former idolaters, adulterers, exploiters, thieves, drunkards, revilers, and practitioners of same-sex intercourse, and then declared, “And some of you used to be like this. 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” ([1 Corinthians 6:11](#)). The church's authority is therefore not the superiority of the clean over the unclean. It is the authority of a gospel that names sin truthfully because Christ truly washes sinners.

What the Chapter Is and Is Not Claiming

Precision is a duty of love. The initials LGBT and their expanded forms gather different experiences, identities, behaviours, theories, and political projects. Lesbian and gay ordinarily refer to women and men whose predominant romantic or sexual attraction is directed toward persons of the same sex. Bisexual refers to attraction toward more than one sex. Transgender concerns an experienced gender identity that differs from sex identified or recorded at birth. Queer may function as an umbrella identity, a reclaimed term, or a theoretical challenge to stable sexual and gender categories. These realities overlap in public movements, but they are not identical.

Sex, gender, attraction, identity, conduct, and ideology must also be distinguished. Biological sex refers to the bodily organisation associated with reproduction, ordinarily male or female, involving chromosomes, gonads, hormones, internal and external anatomy, and secondary characteristics. Disorders or differences of sex development are genuine and sometimes complex medical conditions, but they do not erase the reproductive organisation of the species. Gender can refer to social expectations, roles, expressions, or a person's experienced identity. Gender roles vary considerably across cultures and history. The fact that styles, occupations, or social conventions vary does not prove that embodied sex is socially manufactured.

Attraction is an experienced direction of desire. Temptation is an enticement toward what is forbidden. Desire can be spontaneous, cultivated, resisted, entertained, or enacted. Fantasy is desire imaginatively rehearsed. Identity is the account by which a person names and locates the self. Conduct is action. A relationship is a sustained social and moral bond. Ideology is a wider system of claims concerning reality, power, rights, language, institutions, and the good. These categories influence one another, but they should not be collapsed.

A person may experience an unwanted attraction without choosing its initial appearance. Another may adopt an identity after a long period of reflection. Another may support civil protections while rejecting queer theology. Another may practise same-sex relations without belonging to an activist movement. Another may experience gender distress and reject medical transition. Another may adopt progressive theology while having no personal LGBT identity. Pastoral care fails when it treats all these people as one political object.

The moral distinction between temptation and consent is especially important. Jesus was tempted yet without sin ([Hebrews 4:15](#)). Temptation itself can be a form of suffering. Sin occurs when the heart welcomes, nourishes, justifies, or enacts what God forbids, though the precise movement from involuntary awareness to culpable consent requires humble pastoral judgment. This principle applies to heterosexual and same-sex desire alike. A married man who notices an attractive woman is not thereby an adulterer. He sins when he gazes in order to possess her inwardly, cultivates fantasy, or acts ([Matthew 5:27-30](#)). A believer who experiences same-sex attraction is not beyond grace, excluded from fellowship, or automatically defined by the temptation. The call is to bring desire beneath Christ rather than make desire the final name of the self.

The chapter also distinguishes compassion from affirmation. Compassion enters suffering, protects life, listens carefully, refuses humiliation, and bears burdens. Affirmation, in the disputed theological sense, declares an identity, sexual relationship, or transition morally good and worthy of ecclesial recognition. One may protect a neighbour from violence without affirming every moral claim that neighbour makes. One may oppose criminal mistreatment without changing Christian doctrine. One may remain present to a suffering child without allowing fear to decide anthropology.

Civil legality and ecclesial blessing are similarly distinct. In plural societies, Christians debate which sins should be prohibited by law, what protections are owed to citizens, and how conscience should be respected. Not every sin should be criminalised, and not everything legal is righteous. The

church's sacramental, liturgical, and disciplinary judgments answer a different question: what may be blessed in the name of God?

Finally, the chapter does not claim that every person who adopts affirming theology is malicious, that every medical or psychological professional is ideologically captured, that every traditional culture is biblical, or that every political opponent conspires toward one secret plan. Ideas spread through mixed motives, including compassion, fear, ambition, experience, scholarship, institutional pressure, and sincere error. The task is to test doctrine and fruit, not invent hidden intentions.

From Covenant to Autonomous Desire

The sexual revolution did not begin on one date, arise from one thinker, or proceed according to one plan. It is better understood as a convergence of philosophical, technological, economic, legal, therapeutic, and cultural developments that changed the social meaning of sex. The common movement was from sexuality governed by creation, covenant, kinship, procreation, and moral obligation toward sexuality governed increasingly by consent, authenticity, psychological wellbeing, and self-expression.

This description must be qualified. Premodern societies were not sexually pure. Adultery, prostitution, abuse, concubinage, pederasty, coercion, double standards, and exploitation are ancient. Christian societies often tolerated male misconduct while punishing women severely. Marriages could be arranged without sufficient regard for the vulnerable. Shame sometimes protected reputation rather than victims. The sexual revolution gained moral force partly because older arrangements contained real injustice.

Yet the exposure of hypocrisy does not settle the meaning of sex. A corrupt magistrate does not abolish justice. A violent husband does not refute marriage. A church that silenced victims does not prove that desire should govern the body. The question is whether reform returns sexuality to God's good order or replaces that order with another sovereignty.

Ancient Distinctions and the Christian Moral Revolution

The ancient Mediterranean world knew a wide variety of sexual practices, but it did not ordinarily organise identity through the modern categories “heterosexual” and “homosexual.” Social status, activity and passivity, age, citizenship, household hierarchy, and honour often shaped moral judgment. Elite men might exercise sexual access to slaves, prostitutes, adolescents, and persons of lower status while preserving a public household. Such practices reveal that the modern claim, “The Bible knew only exploitative same-sex relations,” contains a partial truth but is too simple. Exploitation was widespread, yet ancient sources also knew enduring affection and adult same-sex relations in varied forms (Loader, 2012).

Early Christianity challenged the broader sexual order, not only same-sex acts. It condemned adultery, prostitution, incest, pederasty, lust, abandonment, and the sexual use of slaves. It required men as well as women to practise fidelity and chastity. The body belonged to the Lord, and the powerful man's appetite did not grant moral permission. Harper (2013) argues that Christianity contributed to a deep reorganisation of sexual morality by locating sex within a universal moral order before God rather than primarily within status and civic honour.

That history does not prove Christian doctrine true, but it corrects the claim that traditional sexual ethics are merely the residue of one modern Western prejudice. The church's sexual discipline arose in a world where many practices now defended as liberation already existed in other forms. Christians were not always faithful to their own teaching, but the teaching itself opposed the sexual entitlement of the strong.

The Inward Turn and the Psychological Self

The genealogy traced in Chapters 2 and 5 now becomes sexual. Enlightenment autonomy relocated authority toward the rational subject. Romanticism deepened the authority of inward feeling. Freud placed sexual desire near the centre of psychological development and interpreted repression as a source of conflict. The therapeutic revolution increasingly framed moral limits through the language of psychological health. Taylor's (1989, 1991) account of modern identity describes a long inward turn in which authenticity becomes a moral ideal. Rieff (1966) observed the emergence of psychological man, whose liberation from inherited sacred order becomes a defining cultural task. Trueman (2020) applies this genealogy to contemporary sexual identity: the self is experienced as psychologically interior, and public recognition is demanded so that the inner self may be socially real.

This history should not be reduced to a chain of villains. Freud exposed hidden motives and the costs of hypocrisy. Romanticism resisted reduction of persons to mechanisms. Modern psychology has helped people understand trauma, compulsion, attachment, and suffering. The theological problem emerges when the interior self becomes revelatory. Desire is no longer one aspect of the fallen person to be interpreted. It becomes the truth by which body, family, church, and Scripture must be interpreted.

The result is a new moral grammar. In the older covenantal grammar, the question was, "How should my desires be ordered toward the good?" In the expressive grammar, the question becomes, "Which institutions must change so that my deepest desires may be recognised?" The first assumes that desire requires formation. The second increasingly assumes that nonrecognition is oppression.

Technology, Contraception, and the Separation of Sex from Procreation

The sexual revolution was also technological. Reliable contraception altered the practical relationship among sexual union, procreation, marriage, and social consequence. This did not create sexual sin, and contraception raises questions that Christians answer differently. It did, however, make it culturally plausible to imagine sex primarily as private intimacy or recreation rather than an act intrinsically related to the generation of life.

Once procreation is treated as an optional external consequence, the male-female structure of sexual union can appear morally incidental. The argument then shifts from embodied complementarity toward consent, emotional commitment, and personal fulfilment. These goods matter. Consent excludes coercion. Fidelity restrains betrayal. Affection dignifies relationship. Yet none by itself answers why the body is sexually differentiated or why marriage historically unites the sexes.

No-fault divorce, reproductive technologies, mass pornography, commercial advertising, and digital dating further detached sex from covenantal permanence. The market learned to sell bodies, novelty, insecurity, access, and fantasy. The screen removed distance between temptation and consumption. Pornography is not a marginal conservative complaint. It is an industrial training in depersonalisation, where people are converted into images and desire is taught to demand endless variety. Later chapters will address media formation in greater depth, but the sexual revolution cannot be understood without recognising that private appetite became profitable infrastructure.

From Toleration to Recognition

Modern LGBT movements emerged partly in response to criminalisation, police harassment, medical pathologisation, employment discrimination, family rejection, and public humiliation. The demand that people not be assaulted, imprisoned, or denied ordinary civil protection deserves serious moral attention. Christians should not romanticise every past law or every religious response. Some laws were disproportionate; some enforcement was brutal; some churches treated shame as holiness.

Political movements, however, do not remain conceptually static. In many Western settings the public argument moved from decriminalisation to antidiscrimination, from tolerance to recognition,

from recognition to marriage, from marriage to liturgical blessing, and from blessing to institutional expectations concerning language, education, employment, and professional practice. The sequence did not occur identically everywhere, and supporters understand it as the removal of unjust exclusion. The theological point is narrower: recognition eventually reaches the altar. The church is asked not only to refrain from mistreatment but to say in God's name that the relationship is good.

Current data show both rapid expansion and global divergence. Gallup reported in 2026 that 9.0 percent of United States adults identified as LGBTQ+ in 2025, more than double its first measurement in 2012, with nearly one in four Generation Z adults identifying as something other than heterosexual (Gallup, 2026). Pew Research Center reported that by June 2025 same-sex marriage was legal in nearly forty jurisdictions, concentrated mainly in Europe and the Americas, while public support varied dramatically among countries (Pew Research Center, 2026). ILGA World's legal mapping likewise records simultaneous decriminalisation, marriage recognition, restrictions, and criminal penalties across different regions (ILGA World, 2024). These figures describe identity and law. They do not by themselves establish moral truth.

The institutional church has followed the same divergent pattern. The United Methodist Church's 2024 General Conference removed denomination-wide restrictions related to non-heterosexual clergy and same-sex weddings, with revised provisions effective in 2025 (United Methodist Church, 2025). The Church of England has commended *Prayers of Love and Faith* for use with same-sex couples, explicitly offering thanksgiving and prayers for God's blessing upon their shared life (Church of England, 2023). The Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America have long authorised forms of same-sex recognition, marriage, or partnered ministry, with continuing liturgical and doctrinal development (The Episcopal Church, 2015, 2021; Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 2009/2025).

These are not rumours about hidden infiltration. They are public ecclesial decisions. Their significance lies in what worship does. A church may tolerate civil arrangements without blessing them. Once it prays thanksgiving over a union, authorises a rite, or ordains teachers who publicly reject historic sexual doctrine, the revision has moved from private opinion into the church's official confession.

Created, Embodied, Covenantal

Christian sexual ethics do not begin with a list of forbidden acts. They begin with the God who creates, blesses, distinguishes, joins, commands, redeems, indwells, and raises the body. Prohibitions protect a positive order. If that order is not seen, Christian teaching will sound like arbitrary restriction imposed upon otherwise self-defining desire.

Male and Female in the Image of God

[Genesis 1:26-28](#) declares that humanity is created in God's image, "male and female." The image of God belongs equally to both. Woman is not a lesser bearer of divine dignity, and man is not closer to God by sex. The text rejects every theology that treats women as property, every culture that excuses male sexual entitlement, and every church that protects abusive men while scrutinising wounded women.

Male and female are also named within creation before the fall. Sexual difference is not introduced as punishment, pathology, or social invention. It belongs to humanity's good creaturely form. The terms do not imply that every man and woman conforms to narrow cultural stereotypes. Men differ from one another; women differ from one another. Courage, tenderness, intelligence, leadership, craftsmanship, nurture, strength, artistic sensitivity, and technical skill are not owned by one sex. Scripture's affirmation of male and female does not baptise every custom called masculine or feminine.

Yet freedom from stereotypes is not freedom from embodiment. The body is not a preliminary sketch that the inner self completes. It is part of the person God creates. Christian anthropology rejects both crude materialism and disembodied selfhood. The human person is an embodied soul, not a mind accidentally housed in biological equipment. The body can be wounded, disordered, disabled, and experienced painfully under the fall, but it remains morally and eschatologically significant. God redeems persons, not inward identities liberated from bodies.

The command to be fruitful joins sexual difference to generativity. Not every marriage produces children, and infertility does not make a marriage invalid or inferior. The elderly couple remains truly married. Nevertheless, male-female union is the kind of bodily communion naturally ordered toward procreation, even when procreation does not occur. Same-sex intimacy cannot possess this form, not because affection is absent, but because bodily complementarity is absent.

The One-Flesh Covenant

[Genesis 2:18-25](#) develops the meaning of sexual difference. The man's aloneness is "not good," and God provides a corresponding helper. The Hebrew expression often translated "helper suitable for him" does not imply inferiority. God Himself is called Israel's helper. The woman corresponds to the man as equal image-bearer and bodily other.

The man's exclamation recognises both sameness and difference: "bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh." The narrative then gives the pattern: a man leaves father and mother, bonds with his wife, and the two become one flesh. Marriage creates a new covenantal household through public, exclusive, enduring union. Sexual intercourse is not the whole of marriage, but it is the embodied sign and consummation of the covenant. The body says what the vows promise: I give myself to you in a union fitted for fidelity, kinship, and potential generation.

One flesh cannot be reduced to emotional closeness. Friends may share profound affection without becoming one flesh. Nor does one flesh mean merely genital contact, since prostitution creates a bodily union that contradicts covenant ([1 Corinthians 6:15-18](#)). The biblical meaning integrates body, covenant, exclusivity, permanence, and sexual difference.

This is why marriage cannot be reconstructed simply by transferring the virtues of permanence and fidelity to any intimate pairing. Permanence and fidelity are necessary goods, but the moral form of marriage also includes what kind of union is being made. Two brothers may love one another faithfully for life, but their permanence does not make the relationship marriage. A community may care for children with extraordinary sacrifice, but care alone does not erase the distinction between motherhood and fatherhood. The question is not whether same-sex couples can display affection, loyalty, hospitality, courage, or sacrifice. They can. The question is whether those virtues transform a same-sex sexual relationship into the one-flesh union Scripture names marriage.

Jesus Returns the Dispute to Creation

When questioned about divorce, Jesus does not begin with contemporary custom. He returns to creation: "Haven't you read that he who created them in the beginning made them male and female?" He then cites the one-flesh pattern and declares, "What God has joined together, let no one separate" ([Matthew 19:3-6](#)).

The immediate controversy is divorce, not homosexuality. That context strengthens rather than weakens the passage's relevance. Jesus identifies the normative architecture of marriage while correcting a practice accommodated because of hardness of heart. He joins male and female creation, leaving and cleaving, one flesh, divine action, and permanence. Marriage is not merely a civil contract between any consenting adults. It is a created covenantal union God joins.

Jesus then honours celibacy. Some do not marry because of circumstances from birth, some because of human action, and some renounce marriage for the kingdom ([Matthew 19:10-12](#)). The text must not be forced into modern diagnostic categories, but it establishes that marriage is not necessary for complete humanity or faithful discipleship. The unmarried Christ is the perfect human.

Paul honours singleness as a calling that can enable undivided service ([1 Corinthians 7:7-8](#), [1 Corinthians 7:32-35](#)).

This is crucial for pastoral theology. If the church treats romantic partnership as the necessary completion of life, its demand for chastity will sound like a demand for nonexistence. Congregations that idolise the nuclear family, structure every ministry around couples, and leave single adults relationally homeless help create the very loneliness that affirming theology promises to cure. A biblical church must be a real household, not a weekly audience. Celibacy is bearable not through slogans but through friendship, shared meals, intergenerational belonging, meaningful service, spiritual intimacy, and practical care.

The Fall and the Disorder of Desire

[Genesis 3:1-24](#) brings shame, blame, domination, pain, alienation, and death into human life. Sexual desire is not uniquely fallen, but it is deeply affected by the fall. The sexual revolution often assumes that deep, persistent, or unchosen desire reveals the authentic self. Scripture teaches that every person experiences desires that do not tell the truth about the good.

Some desires are ordinary and lawful. Some are distorted by deprivation, fear, habit, trauma, cultural formation, hormonal processes, fantasy, opportunity, or previous action. Some arise without an explanation the person can identify. Scripture does not require a complete causal theory before it issues a moral command. The married believer who desires someone else's spouse may not have chosen the first sensation. The command remains. The unmarried heterosexual believer may experience strong desire without a lawful opportunity for fulfilment. The command remains. The person with same-sex attraction may experience the desire as longstanding, exclusive, and resistant to change. The command remains, but it must be carried within compassion and community rather than contempt.

James distinguishes temptation from God's agency. A person is tempted when drawn and enticed by desire; desire, when conceived, gives birth to sin ([James 1:13-15](#)). Paul similarly commands believers not to let sin reign in the mortal body so that they obey its desires ([Romans 6:12-14](#)). Neither apostle teaches that desire is unreal. They deny that it is sovereign.

Chastity, Not Heterosexual Respectability

Biblical chastity is the faithful ordering of sexuality according to one's calling. For the unmarried, it requires abstinence from sexual intercourse and the cultivation of purity in thought and conduct. For the married, it requires exclusive fidelity, tenderness, justice, self-control, mutual responsibility, and refusal to use the spouse as an object. Chastity is not merely the absence of same-sex conduct.

Jesus locates adultery in the lustful gaze ([Matthew 5:27-30](#)). He names sexual immorality and adultery among evils that proceed from the heart ([Mark 7:20-23](#)). Paul commands the Thessalonians to abstain from sexual immorality, control their bodies in holiness and honour, and refuse lustful passion that wrongs another person ([1 Thessalonians 4:3-8](#)).

The biblical alternative to LGBT affirmation is therefore not the celebration of heterosexual appetite. It is the crucifixion and reordering of every appetite under Christ. A heterosexual man who consumes pornography is not defending creation. He is training his desire to detach sex from covenant and persons from dignity. A pastor who commits adultery while preaching against same-sex relationships is not standing for holiness. He is staging orthodoxy while denying it with his body. A church that ignores cohabitation among popular members but disciplines a same-sex couple selectively has replaced holiness with political signalling.

The Body Belongs to the Lord

Paul's argument in [1 Corinthians 6:12-20](#) is among Scripture's most concentrated theologies of the body. The Corinthians appear to have repeated slogans of freedom and appetite. Paul answers that

not everything is beneficial and that he will not be mastered by anything. Food may be for the stomach, but the body is not for sexual immorality. It is for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body.

The resurrection anchors ethics. God raised the Lord and will raise believers. The body is a member of Christ and a temple of the Holy Spirit. Sexual conduct is therefore not private ownership exercised over disposable matter. The believer has been bought at a price and must glorify God with the body.

This doctrine corrects two errors. The first despises the body as an obstacle to spiritual authenticity. The second worships the body as a source of identity or pleasure. Christianity does neither. It receives the body as created, disciplines it as fallen, honours it as indwelt, and awaits it as raised.

The Canonical Witness Concerning Same-Sex Intercourse

Affirming interpretation often argues that the biblical texts condemn only exploitative, idolatrous, excessive, or unequal same-sex relations unlike modern covenantal unions. That case deserves to be heard in its strongest form. Ancient societies did contain pederasty, prostitution, slavery, domination, and cultic sex. Biblical writers did not possess modern psychological categories of sexual orientation. A responsible traditional reading should acknowledge these facts rather than pretend that Paul wrote a contemporary clinical manual.

The decisive question is whether the texts ground their prohibition only in those abusive features or in the sex of the partners and the created order more broadly.

Sodom, Violence, and the Limits of One Narrative

[Genesis 19:1-29](#) describes attempted gang rape, violent domination, and contempt for hospitality. It should not be reduced to a story about loving same-sex unions. The men of Sodom seek to assault visitors. Ezekiel later identifies arrogance, excess, neglect of the poor, and abominations among Sodom's sins ([Ezekiel 16:49-50](#)). Jude refers to sexual immorality and pursuit of “strange flesh” ([Jude 7](#)).

The affirming observation that Sodom is not a simple account of consensual homosexual partnership is correct. Traditional arguments become weak when they make this narrative carry more than it does. Yet the story also cannot be transformed into evidence that Scripture is indifferent to the sexual character of the assault. The desire to violate male visitors is part of the narrative's moral horror, as the parallel atrocity in [Judges 19](#) confirms. [Genesis 19](#) is not the central foundation of the biblical sexual ethic. Creation and the wider canonical witness are.

Leviticus and the Question of Enduring Moral Order

[Leviticus 18:22](#) prohibits a man from lying with a male as with a woman. [Leviticus 20:13](#) repeats the prohibition within Israel's covenantal sanctions. Affirming readings often place these texts among purity rules no longer binding upon Christians or connect them to idolatrous Canaanite practices.

Christians do not apply the Mosaic covenant as though Christ had not fulfilled it. Food laws, sacrificial regulations, circumcision, temple rites, and Israel's civil penalties are not transferred mechanically to the church. The death penalty in Leviticus is not the church's commission. The question is whether the sexual prohibition expresses a moral judgment reaffirmed under the new covenant.

Several features support continuity. [Leviticus 18](#) gathers incest, adultery, child sacrifice, male same-sex intercourse, and bestiality, and states that the nations were defiled by these practices before Israel received the law. The chapter does not describe only ceremonial distinctives. The

apostolic decree in [Acts 15:19-29](#) requires Gentile believers to abstain from sexual immorality, using a category shaped by Israel's sexual law. Paul appears to echo Levitical wording when he forms the term *arsenokoitai* from the Greek words for male and bed in the Septuagint versions of [Leviticus 18:22](#) and [Leviticus 20:13](#) (Gagnon, 2001; Loader, 2012).

The traditional case therefore does not depend on importing Israel's civil penalties. It recognises covenantal transformation while observing that the New Testament reaffirms the moral pattern.

[Romans 1](#) and the Exchange of Created Order

[Romans 1:18-32](#) is the most extensive New Testament discussion. Paul describes humanity's suppression of truth, refusal of gratitude, idolatrous exchange, and divine handing over to disordered desire. Women exchange natural sexual relations for unnatural ones, and men abandon natural relations with women and burn with desire for one another.

Affirming interpretations offer several arguments. “Against nature” may mean conduct contrary to a person's own heterosexual orientation, excessive lust, or violation of conventional gender roles rather than a universal creation norm. The passage is embedded in idolatry and may address pagan cults or uncontrolled passion. Paul may not have known faithful same-sex partnerships or a stable homosexual orientation. Brownson (2013) argues that the wider moral logic should focus on lust, shame, and patriarchy rather than anatomical complementarity. Hays and Hays (2024) move beyond verse-by-verse revision and appeal to a broader biblical trajectory of widening mercy and inclusion.

These arguments identify real contextual elements. [Romans 1](#) concerns idolatry and disorder, not a detached ethics manual. Paul describes passionate desire. Ancient understandings of orientation differed from modern ones. Yet the text's reasoning is broader than cultic abuse. Paul deliberately echoes creation through references to Creator, created things, male and female. The exchange in sexuality mirrors the exchange in worship. The women and men are not described as victims of coercion. Mutual desire is explicit. The repeated phrase “for one another” makes it difficult to restrict the condemnation to exploitative relations.

The claim that “against nature” refers only to acting against one's individual orientation also lacks support in the passage. Paul does not say that naturally heterosexual people violate their personal constitution. He contrasts same-sex relations with the male-female pattern, using language that Jewish moral tradition applied to created order. Elsewhere Paul can call culturally unexpected conduct “contrary to nature” in a nonmoral metaphor ([Romans 11:24](#)), which shows that context determines meaning. In [Romans 1](#) the context is moral, theological, and creational.

The passage must not be isolated from [Romans 2:1](#), which condemns the self-righteous judge, or from [Romans 3:23-24](#), which places all under sin and announces justification by grace. [Romans 1](#) is not a licence for heterosexual pride. It is part of Paul's universal indictment. But universal indictment does not erase the specific conduct named.

***Malakoi, Arsenokoitai*, and the Limits of Lexical Escape**

[1 Corinthians 6:9-11](#) includes *malakoi* and *arsenokoitai* in a vice list. Translation is contested. *Malakos* literally means soft and can refer to clothing, weakness, moral decadence, or an effeminate male, depending on context. In sexual contexts it was sometimes used for the passive male partner. *Arsenokoitai* is rare before Paul and appears to be formed from the Greek wording of Leviticus. Some have proposed meanings such as male prostitutes, pederasts, or economic exploiters.

Responsible exegesis should avoid false certainty about every nuance. A single lexicon entry cannot settle the whole debate. The terms may carry social assumptions from the ancient world that are not identical to modern identity categories. Yet lexical uncertainty cannot bear the weight placed upon it by revisionist arguments. The pairing in [1 Corinthians 6](#) plausibly refers to participants in male same-sex intercourse, and *arsenokoitai* in [1 Timothy 1:8-11](#) appears within conduct contrary to sound teaching. The Levitical echo concerns male-with-male intercourse, not merely exploitation.

Even if one disputed the precise scope of both terms, the canonical argument would remain. Genesis establishes male-female one flesh. Jesus reaffirms it. [Romans 1](#) speaks explicitly of mutual same-sex desire and conduct. No biblical text positively presents a same-sex sexual union as marriage or blesses it as holy. The traditional doctrine does not rest on one disputed word.

“And Some of You Used to Be Like This”

The vice list is often used as a weapon. Paul uses it as a doorway to grace. He does not say that sexual sin is harmless, nor does he permanently name believers by their former practices. “And some of you used to be like this.” The verbs that follow are divine and ecclesial treasures: washed, sanctified, justified.

Washing speaks of cleansing and new life. Sanctification speaks of being set apart to God and progressively formed in holiness. Justification speaks of God’s righteous verdict in Christ. The basis is not sexual self-repair but the name of the Lord Jesus and the Spirit of God. The gospel neither affirms the old life nor leaves the repentant person imprisoned within it.

The church therefore should resist two opposite distortions. One says, “This desire or conduct is your deepest identity, and God must affirm it.” The other says, “This past or temptation is your permanent disgrace, and the church will never trust or receive you.” Paul says something better: sin is serious enough to require washing and grace is powerful enough to give a new name.

The Strongest Case for Affirmation

An argument is not answered faithfully until it has been represented in a form its serious advocates could recognise. LGBT-affirming Christians do not all reason in the same way. Some argue that the biblical texts have been mistranslated or detached from ancient exploitation. Some accept that Scripture’s authors rejected same-sex intercourse but contend that the church may develop morally beyond their limitations. Some appeal to covenantal virtues within same-sex unions. Others appeal to the trajectory of inclusion, the fruits of relationships, contemporary knowledge of orientation, or the psychological harm associated with rejection. Queer theologians may question the entire demand that LGBT lives become acceptable through traditional categories.

These approaches differ. Their convergence lies in the conclusion that the church should recognise same-sex unions, LGBT identities, or gender transition as compatible with faithful Christian life.

The Historical-Distance Argument

The first argument stresses the distance between ancient and modern sexuality. Biblical authors knew pederasty, slavery, prostitution, domination, and idolatrous excess, but not modern egalitarian same-sex marriage based on enduring orientation and mutual commitment. Therefore, it is argued, the texts address abusive forms rather than the relationships now before the church.

This argument has moral force because historical context matters. Scripture must not be made to answer a question in categories unavailable to its authors without careful reasoning. Yet the argument often assumes that a new psychological description creates a new moral object. Modern orientation language may describe the persistence and direction of desire more precisely. It does not change the bodily structure of the act. Paul’s language in [Romans 1](#) includes mutuality and same-sex desire. The creation texts define marriage positively before questions of exploitation arise.

Historical difference can affect application without reversing moral form. Modern adultery may involve emotional compatibility, informed consent, and lifelong intention. Those features do not transform adultery into marriage. The relevant question is not whether contemporary same-sex couples resemble every ancient example. It is whether the biblical ethic condemns only abuse or locates sexual union within male-female covenant.

The Covenant-Fidelity Argument

A stronger affirming case acknowledges the importance of creation, faithfulness, and covenant but argues that the central biblical goods can be realised in same-sex unions. Brownson (2013) emphasises kinship, mutuality, procreation understood more broadly as social fruitfulness, and the moral contrast between exploitative lust and covenantal love. The relationship should be judged by fidelity, permanence, sacrifice, and fruit rather than by the partners' sex.

This argument rightly refuses promiscuity as the only alternative to traditional doctrine. It recognises virtues that may genuinely appear in same-sex relationships. Christians should not deny observable loyalty or tenderness merely to protect a conclusion. Common grace enables people outside God's moral order to display real virtues in partial and inconsistent forms.

The difficulty is that virtues do not independently define the institution in which they appear. Loyalty within an unlawful alliance does not make the alliance lawful. Sacrifice within an idolatrous vocation does not sanctify the vocation. The moral evaluation of a sexual union includes not only how the partners treat one another but what kind of bodily covenant they enact. Fidelity is fidelity to a good. It cannot make every object good by attaching itself to it.

Jesus' Silence and His Welcome of the Marginalised

A common argument observes that Jesus never explicitly mentions homosexuality. He does, however, welcome outsiders, touch the unclean, eat with sinners, defend the shamed, and rebuke religious exclusion. Therefore, affirming Christians argue, fidelity to Jesus should move the church toward inclusion rather than boundary-making.

Jesus' welcome is central to the gospel. He receives those whom respectable religion despises. He refuses the pride that ranks sinners according to social acceptability. Yet His silence concerning one term does not imply approval. Jesus does not explicitly name every form of incest, pederasty, or bestiality. He speaks within Israel's moral world, condemns *porneia* broadly, intensifies sexual holiness to the heart, and reaffirms marriage from male-female creation.

His welcome also carries a call. To the woman accused of adultery He refuses mob condemnation and commands, "Go, and from now on do not sin anymore" ([John 8:1-11](#)). The textual history of the passage requires careful note, but the saying harmonises with the Gospel's portrait of grace and holiness. Jesus receives Zacchaeus and restitution follows. He receives sinners and calls them to repentance. Inclusion in His fellowship is not certification of the old life. It is summons into the kingdom.

The Trajectory of Inclusion

The inclusion argument appeals to biblical developments such as Gentile incorporation, the dismantling of food boundaries, and the church's later rejection of slavery. Hays and Hays (2024) argue that Scripture itself depicts God widening mercy, revising prior patterns, and leading communities toward more expansive inclusion. The church should therefore discern an analogous movement concerning LGBT people.

This approach should not be dismissed as simple contempt for Scripture. It attempts to reason canonically and attends to God's surprising mercy. [Acts 10](#) does show Peter's inherited categories being corrected. The Jerusalem council welcomes Gentiles without circumcision. The gospel crosses boundaries of ethnicity, class, sex, and status.

The analogy fails, however, when inclusion is confused with moral affirmation. Gentiles are included as Gentiles, but they are commanded to turn from idols and sexual immorality ([Acts 15:19-29](#)). The abolition of ethnic barriers fulfils explicit promises that the nations would be blessed. The New Testament does not portray same-sex intercourse as a ceremonial marker removed in Christ. It includes it within moral vice lists and places sexual holiness within sanctification.

Slavery also provides an imperfect analogy. Scripture regulates ancient slavery within fallen societies, judges kidnapping, human theft, cruelty, and partiality, relativises masters and slaves in Christ, and plants principles that challenge ownership of persons. Same-sex intercourse is not a social hierarchy that the gospel gradually equalises. It is conduct explicitly assessed within a theology of creation. A trajectory cannot be constructed by moving from a text's moral judgment to its opposite without clear canonical warrant.

The claim that God “changes His mind” must also be handled carefully. Scripture uses relational and anthropomorphic language to describe God's responsive action in history. It does not teach that the holy Creator discovers that previous moral revelation was mistaken. The Spirit can correct the church's misunderstanding. He does not correct His own inspiration by contradiction.

The Argument from Fruit

Some same-sex couples display patience, fidelity, generosity, service, and spiritual devotion. Some affirming congregations report conversions, care for the poor, compelling worship, and lives of sacrifice. Jesus said that trees are known by fruit ([Matthew 7:15-20](#)). Why, then, should these fruits not authenticate the relationship or theology?

Fruit matters, but fruit must be defined by Scripture. Charisma, kindness, social action, emotional stability, and endurance are not self-interpreting. A person can be generous and sexually immoral, courageous and proud, doctrinally orthodox and cruel. Jesus' warning about fruit occurs within a passage about false prophets and obedience to the Father's will. The Spirit's fruit includes love and kindness, but also faithfulness and self-control ([Galatians 5:22-24](#)).

Observable goods in a relationship should be acknowledged. They do not nullify a moral boundary any more than affection within an adulterous relationship makes adultery holy. The existence of partial fruit demonstrates the complexity of human beings, not the falsity of revelation.

The Argument from Harm and Mental Wellbeing

The most pastorally urgent argument holds that traditional teaching contributes to shame, depression, family rejection, homelessness, self-harm, and suicide. Sexual and gender minority populations experience documented mental-health disparities, and minority stress research identifies stigma, discrimination, concealment, rejection, and victimisation as significant contributors (Meyer, 2003; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2020). United States youth surveillance has likewise reported markedly poorer mental-health outcomes among students identifying as LGBTQ+ (Verlenden et al., 2024).

These findings must never be treated as propaganda to be dismissed. A bullied child is not an ideological abstraction. A young person threatening self-harm requires immediate protection, calm presence, competent assessment, and professional care. A family that uses theology to humiliate or expel a child sins against love and may intensify danger. The church should be a place where suffering can be spoken without ridicule.

At the same time, the evidence does not establish that every form of nonaffirmation causes harm or that theological affirmation is the only protective response. Mental-health disparities arise through multiple pathways, including victimisation, family conflict, isolation, pre-existing conditions, social media, identity distress, substance use, and other comorbid factors. Cross-sectional associations cannot by themselves establish a complete causal account. The National Academies (2020) repeatedly notes heterogeneity, measurement limitations, and the need to distinguish identity, attraction, behaviour, sex, and gender.

The moral concept of harm also requires definition. Immediate distress does not automatically make a truthful boundary harmful. Medical treatment may cause pain. A parent may prevent an intoxicated child from driving. Church discipline can grieve while aiming at restoration. Conversely, a doctrinal statement can be true and communicated harmfully through contempt, exposure, threats,

or abandonment. Christians must not use “truth” to evade responsibility for manner, timing, relationship, and foreseeable danger.

Professional bodies reject coercive efforts to change sexual orientation and warn of reported harms. The American Psychological Association's 2021 resolution opposes sexual orientation change efforts and describes orientation as involving attraction, behaviour, identity, and related experiences (American Psychological Association, 2021). Christians should reject coercion, humiliation, guaranteed claims of change, aversive methods, and any practice that ignores consent or evidence. This does not require the church to forbid voluntary pastoral care, prayer, discipleship, or counselling chosen by adults who seek to live according to Christian convictions. Ethical care should neither promise transformation it cannot guarantee nor assume that the client's only healthy goal is identity affirmation.

The same caution applies to gender distress. The World Health Organization moved gender incongruence in ICD-11 out of the chapter on mental disorders and into conditions related to sexual health (World Health Organization, 2019). That classification is important but does not settle theological anthropology or every clinical pathway. The Cass Review and NHS England's subsequent implementation emphasised holistic assessment, multidisciplinary care, evidentiary uncertainty, and caution in services for children and young people (Cass, 2024; NHS England, 2024). The existence of professional disagreement and evolving policy should produce humility rather than slogans.

The church must therefore refuse a cruel false choice: affirm every identity claim or accept responsibility for every tragic outcome. It can communicate stable love, protect life, oppose bullying, seek qualified care, remain open to evidence, and still confess that no desire or identity outranks Christ.

Queer Theology: From Inclusion to Reconstruction

Affirming biblical interpretation often seeks inclusion within inherited Christian categories. Queer theology may undertake a more radical task. It draws from queer theory's suspicion of fixed identities and norms, attends to marginal experience as a theological location, and explores how doctrines of God, Christ, body, sex, church, and salvation may be reimagined through transgression and instability.

The word *queer* is used in several senses. For some it is an umbrella identity. For others it names resistance to binary and normative categories. In academic theory it can function as a method that destabilises what a culture presents as natural, exposes how institutions produce normality, and refuses the demand that marginal people become respectable by dominant standards.

Butler's *Gender Trouble* challenged stable notions of sex and gender and described gender as performatively constituted through repeated social acts rather than simply expressed from an inner essence (Butler, 1990/2006). Foucault's history of sexuality analysed how modern institutions do not merely repress sex but produce discourses, classifications, and subjects through knowledge and power (Foucault, 1978). These accounts can expose how language and institutions shape self-understanding. They also create theological tension when creaturely categories are treated primarily as effects of discourse rather than realities received from God.

Althaus-Reid's (2000) *Indecent Theology* deliberately unsettles “decent” theological constructions through queer, postcolonial, and liberationist critique. Cheng (2011) presents queer theology through themes of radical love and the disruption of boundaries. Tonstad (2018) moves beyond apologetic inclusion and explores queerness in relation to theology, sex, money, body, and death. These writers differ, and fair criticism should not treat queer theology as one creed.

Nevertheless, several recurring movements can be identified.

First, marginal experience may become a privileged hermeneutical location. Testimony from excluded people can reveal hypocrisy and neglected suffering. Scripture itself gives attention to those

silenced by power. The danger arises when experience gains authority to revise revelation rather than expose misapplication.

Second, stable categories may be treated with suspicion because categories can exclude. Yet creation necessarily includes distinctions. Light and darkness, sea and land, creature and Creator, male and female, holy and common, truth and falsehood are not all oppressive binaries. Sin can exploit a distinction, but exploitation does not prove that distinction itself is violence.

Third, transgression may acquire symbolic theological value. Jesus crosses boundaries, touches the unclean, and overturns social expectations. But Christ's boundary-crossing is governed by holiness and redemption. He crosses the boundary to cleanse the unclean, not to declare uncleanness an illusion. He receives sinners into repentance, not rebellion into sacrament.

Fourth, incarnation may be interpreted as divine solidarity with fluid, marginal, or nonnormative bodies. Christianity indeed confesses that the Son assumed flesh, entered shame, and identified with the rejected. Yet the incarnation is not God's affirmation of every interpretation of embodiment. The incarnate Son obeys the Father in a real male body, fulfils creation rather than dissolving it, and redeems humanity through holy obedience.

Fifth, atonement may be reconstructed as liberation from oppressive normativity rather than deliverance from guilt and corruption. Salvation then becomes recognition, inclusion, and freedom to inhabit desire. The cross remains a symbol of solidarity but loses its judgment upon sin. Chapter 7 has already shown where this path leads: another Jesus and salvation without repentance.

Queer theology's strongest challenge is often directed toward conservative hypocrisy. It asks why churches obsess over minority sexuality while tolerating greed, militarism, racial domination, patriarchy, abuse, and economic exploitation. The question can be prophetic. The answer is not to remove sexual holiness but to recover the whole counsel of God. A church that repents of greed should not bless fornication. A church that protects women should not abolish marriage. Equal accountability means every idol is judged.

The theological conflict is therefore not about whether the church should hear marginal testimony. It should. It concerns whether the Creator's distinctions are gifts to be redeemed or constructions to be destabilised. Queer theology can expose the indecency of religious hypocrisy. It becomes another gospel when transgression itself is made redemptive and the age's interpretation of desire becomes the measure of God's Word.

When Revision Enters the Sanctuary

Doctrinal change becomes ecclesially durable through institutions. Seminaries train ministers. Liturgies teach congregations what to bless. Ordination standards embody judgments about holiness. Publishing systems normalise language. Youth ministries form identity. Donor relationships reward certain priorities. Courts and property structures influence denominational conflict. Digital platforms allow a person to assemble an affirming theological community before speaking to a local pastor.

The institutional demand is often described as inclusion. The word can mean several things. A sinner should be welcomed to hear the gospel. A repentant believer should be received without permanent stigma. A person experiencing same-sex attraction should be able to serve according to biblical qualification. A neighbour should be protected from assault and unjust exclusion. None of these requires the church to ordain an unrepentant teacher, solemnise a same-sex union, or reconstruct baptism as affirmation of self-defined identity.

Liturgical change is especially significant because prayer is doctrine enacted. The Church of England's *Prayers of Love and Faith* are offered for same-sex couples who wish to give thanks for and mark their love in God's presence, with prayer for divine blessing upon their shared life (Church of England, 2023). The Episcopal Church has authorised rites and marriage liturgies for same-sex couples and provides additional resources related to gender affirmation (The Episcopal Church, 2015,

2021). These texts do not merely protect people from mistreatment. They place relationships and identities within public worship.

Supporters understand such rites as pastoral recognition of covenantal love. Traditional Christians see a contradiction: the church asks God to bless what the canonical witness does not name as marriage. The issue cannot be resolved by saying that no one is compelled to use the rite. Institutional authorisation teaches the whole body what may be called holy.

The same applies to clergy. A minister does not represent private spirituality alone. Ordination publicly identifies doctrine and life as worthy of imitation. Where denominations authorise clergy in same-sex marriages or leaders who reject biblical sexual ethics, the revision reaches teaching authority. The church may retain historic creeds while changing the anthropology through which sin, sanctification, and obedience are applied.

Youth formation intensifies the stakes. Young people now encounter identity vocabulary, sexual content, pornography, therapeutic narratives, and peer communities through devices long before many churches teach a biblical theology of the body. Sangwa (2024d, 2026) has rightly asked who is trusted to define the child, warning that education is never merely the transmission of biological facts but also formation in anthropology, authority, and desire. Parents and churches that respond only when a crisis arrives have ceded years of catechesis to platforms.

Yet Chapter 9 must not consume the full subject reserved for Chapter 10. The present point is institutional: once the church accepts inward identity as final, its pastoral practices, liturgies, education, and leadership standards must be redesigned to certify that identity. The revision cannot remain private.

Africa Between Imported Ideology and Cultural Hypocrisy

African churches face pressures from more than one direction. Western governments, corporations, universities, foundations, churches, and development institutions often promote sexual-orientation and gender-identity frameworks as dimensions of human rights and inclusion. African political leaders may respond through criminal law, nationalist rhetoric, or appeals to tradition. Churches may be caught between donor expectations, public hostility, pastoral realities, and the accusation that biblical sexual ethics are colonial imports.

The history is more complicated than either slogan. Colonial governments codified and enforced many sexual laws, but Christian opposition to same-sex intercourse did not originate in modern colonialism. The biblical texts predate European empires, and African Christian communities possess moral agency rather than merely receiving Western scripts. At the same time, precolonial Africa was diverse, and claims about a single timeless “African sexuality” are historically weak (Epprecht, 2013; van Klinken, 2019).

Western influence also operates on both sides. Colonial legal categories, missionary teaching, global evangelical networks, progressive NGOs, international media, and donor institutions all shape African debates. Kaoma (2018) describes how global religious and political networks interact with local anxieties and democratic contestation. The appropriate response is neither romantic nationalism nor imported progressivism. Africa does not need to choose between a Western sexual revolution and an African tradition that may conceal polygamy, adultery, abuse, child marriage, or male privilege. It needs Scripture.

Documented financial and institutional pressure should be described without conspiracy. After Uganda enacted the Anti-Homosexuality Act in 2023, the World Bank stated that the law contradicted its values and later developed additional inclusion and nondiscrimination measures for projects in Uganda (World Bank, 2023, 2025). One may debate the law's justice, proportionality, and effects. The

public record nevertheless demonstrates that sexuality can affect development relationships and institutional conditions.

Christian criticism must remain morally consistent. It should oppose violence, mob action, humiliating exposure, extortion, and denial of ordinary medical care. Criminal penalties can be disproportionate and can endanger people without producing holiness. The church is commissioned to preach, disciple, baptise, discipline its members, protect the vulnerable, and bear truthful witness. It is not authorised to convert the gospel into rage against a minority.

African conservative credibility is also weakened by selective outrage. A leader may condemn homosexuality while keeping mistresses. A church may denounce Western decadence while tolerating sexual exploitation by pastors. Families may reject a son with same-sex attraction while protecting an adulterous uncle. Communities may speak of biblical marriage while normalising abandonment of mothers and children. Such double standards do not make revisionist theology true. They make the church a false witness to the truth it confesses.

The African church must therefore refuse two colonisations. It must refuse the colonisation of Scripture by Western identity ideology. It must also refuse the colonisation of Scripture by culture, tribe, male privilege, political power, and inherited silence. Christ judges every civilisation.

The Unclean Hands of the Morally Respectable

A church can reach a correct conclusion about same-sex conduct and still speak with unclean hands. Jesus' warning about the plank in one's own eye does not prohibit judgment. It commands self-judgment before correction ([Matthew 7:1-5](#)). The church must therefore ask why selected sexual sins produce public alarm while others are managed privately.

Pornography is one of the clearest examples. It trains the eye to consume persons, rewards secrecy, finances exploitation, fractures trust, and turns sexual difference into merchandise. A man who condemns Pride celebrations while repeatedly using women or men on a screen for gratification has accepted the sexual revolution's central doctrine: desire may detach the body from covenant and turn another person into material for the self.

Fornication and cohabitation are often normalised among heterosexual Christians. Couples live together, share a sexual life, and postpone marriage while churches remain silent because the arrangement appears ordinary. Sangwa's earlier teaching on cohabitation and premarital sex correctly locates sexual union within marriage and calls believers to purity (Sangwa, 2024a, 2024b). The application must be consistent. A church cannot claim that Scripture is clear when addressing a same-sex couple and ambiguous when addressing a popular heterosexual couple whose giving, family connections, or social status make discipline inconvenient.

Adultery is sometimes treated as a temporary leadership problem rather than covenant treachery. A gifted preacher confesses after exposure, disappears briefly, and returns without transparent repentance, restitution, marital healing, or tested fruit. Victims are pressured to protect "the ministry." By contrast, a believer who discloses same-sex attraction may be treated as permanently suspect even while living chastely. This inversion rewards secrecy and punishes truthfulness.

Sexual abuse is more serious still. Churches have used submission, forgiveness, reputation, confidentiality, and spiritual authority to silence victims. A congregation that shields a predator while speaking loudly about cultural sexual disorder has become part of the disorder. Biblical sexual ethics protect the vulnerable because they deny every person's right to use another body. Safeguarding, lawful reporting, due process, trauma-informed care, and accountability are not secular distractions from holiness. They are practical forms of justice and truthful witness.

Marriage itself can be idolised. A husband may invoke headship to control, intimidate, or coerce. A wife may be told that endurance of violence is the measure of faith. Single believers may be treated

as incomplete. Infertile couples may be pitied as failed families. These distortions do not arise from the created order but from sin's colonisation of it. Male headship, where confessed, must resemble Christ's self-giving love and never provide immunity for domination ([Ephesians 5:25-33](#)).

The church's public credibility will not be restored by softer language alone. It requires repentance. Men must confess pornography without blaming their wives. Leaders must surrender platforms when disqualified. Churches must stop treating wealth and gifting as evidence of purity. Fathers must take responsibility for children. Husbands and wives must honour covenant. Unmarried believers must reject the lie that loneliness grants sexual permission. The standard is not heterosexual respectability. It is holiness under the lordship of Christ.

Pastoral Care Without Doctrinal Surrender

Pastoral theology begins with persons, not slogans. The same doctrinal truth may need to be spoken differently to a frightened adolescent, a celibate adult believer, an activist theologian, an abusive parent, a repentant former leader, or a young person in immediate danger. Differentiation is not compromise. It is wise love.

To the Person Experiencing Same-Sex Attraction

You are not an abstraction in a culture war. You are a creature made in God's image, known in your full history, and invited to Christ. The first appearance of an unwanted attraction does not place you beyond grace. Persistent temptation does not prove that God has abandoned you. You should not be required to pretend that the struggle is easy or accept promises that sincere prayer will necessarily remove every desire.

Christian discipleship asks every believer to submit the body and its desires to Jesus. For some, that submission includes refusing a same-sex relationship despite deep longing for companionship. The cost should not be minimised. Jesus Himself described discipleship through the cross ([Luke 9:23-25](#)). Yet the cross is not evidence that life is meaningless. It is the path of union with the One who died and rose.

Do not allow sexual desire to become the whole name of the self. In Christ, identity is received through creation, redemption, adoption, membership in His body, vocation, and resurrection hope. The phrase “gay Christian” is used in different ways. Some use it to affirm same-sex relationships. Others use it descriptively while committing to celibacy. Pastors should understand the intended meaning before judging, while also helping believers ask whether any adjective has become more determinative than union with Christ.

The local church owes more than instruction. It owes family. Celibate Christian testimony and careful pastoral reflection have repeatedly shown that chastity must be sustained through truthful friendship, belonging, and patient discipleship rather than reduced to an abstract prohibition (Hill, 2010; Sprinkle, 2015). Celibate believers should not be left to eat alone, age alone, celebrate alone, and suffer alone while married Christians congratulate themselves for defending marriage. Invite them into homes. Share ordinary life. Give them responsibility without making their struggle a public label. Protect confidentiality. Honour truthful testimony. Chastity becomes visible as good when the body of Christ becomes visible as home.

To the Person Experiencing Gender Distress

Gender distress can be profound. A person may experience discomfort with the body, intense anxiety, social alienation, or a longstanding sense of incongruence. Mockery is sinful. Simplistic commands to “just accept yourself” may fail to hear genuine suffering. Parents and pastors should listen patiently, seek competent clinical assessment where appropriate, consider trauma, neurodevelopmental conditions, family dynamics, peer influence, depression, anxiety, and other relevant factors, and avoid predetermined conclusions.

Compassion does not require the belief that every interpretation of distress is true. The body remains part of the person God created. Social stereotypes should be loosened where they burden people needlessly. A girl who dislikes conventional femininity is not less female. A boy who is gentle, artistic, or socially atypical is not less male. The church should not reinforce narrow stereotypes and then treat escape from those stereotypes as evidence of a different sex.

Medical questions require expertise, informed consent, evidence, and careful attention to age and uncertainty. The chapter does not attempt to settle every clinical issue. It insists that neither ideological affirmation nor ideological dismissal should replace individualised care. The person must never become a battlefield upon which adults prove loyalty to a movement.

Christian hope does not promise escape from embodiment. It promises resurrection. The same Lord who knows present distress will raise the body free from corruption. That hope calls the believer to live truthfully now while receiving help, community, and patient care.

To Parents and Families

When a child discloses same-sex attraction or gender distress, the first response can shape years of trust. Rage, threats, public exposure, expulsion, or ridicule are not courage. They are failures of parental stewardship. Say clearly that the child is loved, belongs in the family, and will not be abandoned. Listen before constructing a speech. Ask about safety, bullying, online relationships, mental health, and whether self-harm has been considered. Where danger is present, seek immediate professional help.

Stable love is not the same as instant theological agreement. Parents should not allow fear of losing the child to make every requested conclusion unquestionable. Nor should they use financial dependence, violence, or humiliation to force conformity. Continue relationship. Pray. Study. Find wise pastoral and clinical support. Protect siblings and family boundaries without turning the home into a tribunal.

Parents should also examine the family environment. Has the child heard only condemnation and never a positive theology of the body? Has affection been conditional upon achievement or conformity? Has pornography, adultery, abuse, or hypocrisy damaged trust? Repentance by parents can open a door that argument alone cannot.

To Pastors and Churches

Teach biblical sexuality before crisis. Begin with creation, dignity, marriage, singleness, friendship, the body, holiness, and resurrection. Do not make homosexuality the only sexual subject young people hear from the pulpit. Address pornography, lust, coercion, cohabitation, dating, consent, abuse, infertility, divorce, loneliness, and the good of celibacy.

Create confidential pathways for help. Train leaders to respond without panic. Adopt safeguarding policies. Know when a matter requires professional referral or civil reporting. Do not claim expertise you do not possess. Test counselling ministries for coercion, false promises, and weak evidence. Do not turn a testimony of change into a formula imposed upon everyone.

Church membership and leadership require distinction. An unbeliever should be welcomed to hear the gospel. A struggling believer who confesses sin and seeks obedience should receive patient discipleship. A person who publicly teaches that sin is righteousness raises a doctrinal issue. A leader who solemnises what Scripture forbids is not merely exercising private conscience; the leader is teaching the church through action.

Discipline must be impartial, purposeful, and restorative ([1 Corinthians 5:1-13](#); [Galatians 6:1-2](#)). Apply the same standards to heterosexual and same-sex immorality. Protect the repentant from permanent suspicion. Protect the flock from teachers who refuse correction.

To Affirming Teachers and Denominational Leaders

The gravity of the office requires direct speech. To bless a same-sex union in God's name is not merely to be kind to two people. It is to teach that the church may reverse the moral meaning of creation and apostolic instruction. To tell a person that repentance is unnecessary may feel merciful in the moment, but it removes the person from the path by which Christ gives forgiveness and new life.

Institutional consensus cannot carry the conscience through judgment. A synod may vote. A seminary may revise. A bishop may authorise a liturgy. A publisher may normalise language. None can change what God has spoken. Teachers will be judged more strictly ([James 3:1](#)).

Repentance remains open. Public error requires public correction. Liturgies can be withdrawn. Policies can be reversed. Clergy can confess that compassion was severed from truth. The church has survived other doctrinal collapses by returning to the Word. Humility is not humiliation when it returns sinners to Christ.

To Conservative Christians

Do not use another person's sin to avoid your own. Mockery is not discernment. Political rage is not holiness. A joke that reduces a person to sexual behaviour does not defend creation. Refusing ordinary kindness, employment fairness, physical safety, or emergency care does not honour Christ.

Do not share rumours, exaggerated statistics, or fabricated historical claims. The rainbow flag's colours do not prove a conscious affiliation with Lucifer. A movement may employ symbols in ways Christians judge theologically mistaken without every participant possessing an occult intention. Truth does not need invented evidence.

Do not call every disagreement persecution. Legal and professional conflicts can become serious, but Christians should distinguish inconvenience, loss of privilege, compelled speech, and actual violence. Speak accurately. Extend to opponents the evidentiary fairness you demand for yourself.

Above all, let your life make your doctrine credible. Honour your spouse. Guard your eyes. Protect children. Confess sin. Refuse abusive leaders. Welcome the lonely. Give without self-display. Let people who disagree with you know that you would defend them from violence, sit beside them in grief, and tell them the truth without contempt.

The Gospel Is More Than Prohibition

A chapter on sexual holiness must not end with a locked door. The gospel announces not only what must be left but whom the sinner receives.

Christ does not save a sexual category. He saves persons. He bears guilt, breaks condemnation, gives the Spirit, joins believers to His body, and promises resurrection. The repentant adulterer, pornographer, prostitute, exploiter, cohabiting couple, person in a same-sex relationship, and self-righteous moralist approach through the same cross. No one enters by superior respectability.

Repentance is not self-hatred. It is agreement with God against the lie that destroys us. Faith is not confidence in the power of will. It is trust in the crucified and risen Son. Regeneration is not a religious adjustment to identity. It is new birth. Justification is not social validation. It is God's verdict of righteousness in Christ. Sanctification is not instant perfection. It is the Spirit's persevering work of conforming the believer to Jesus.

This transformation can include dramatic change in desire, but Scripture does not promise the same pattern to everyone. Some believers testify that attractions shifted. Others continue to experience unwanted same-sex attraction while living chastely. Some marry faithfully without treating marriage as therapy. Others remain single. The church should receive credible testimony without turning it into a universal schedule.

Marriage is not a cure for sexual struggle. A person should not marry deceptively in the hope that a spouse will erase unwanted attractions. Such concealment can inflict deep harm. Honest pastoral discernment is necessary. Singleness is not failure. Paul could say that the unmarried state offered distinctive opportunities for devotion to the Lord ([1 Corinthians 7:32-35](#)).

The church's final hope is not successful heterosexuality. It is resurrection. Jesus teaches that earthly marriage does not continue in the resurrection in its present form ([Matthew 22:23-33](#)). Marriage points beyond itself to Christ and the church. Sexual desire, marital status, fertility, and present loneliness do not define eternal worth. The believer's body will be raised, not discarded; purified, not self-invented; filled with joy, not mastered by appetite.

This eschatological horizon exposes the age's promise. The sexual revolution presents fulfilment through recognition, relationship, orgasm, authenticity, and freedom from inherited limits. These goods, where lawful, are still too small to save. No partner can bear the weight of godhood. No orgasm defeats death. No identity label opens the grave. No liturgy authored by a synod can justify the guilty. The Bridegroom alone gives eternal life.

The Lamp in the Last Second

The church lives in an hour of intensified pressure, but urgency must remain sober. Jesus forbids date-setting and commands watchfulness. Not every legal change is a direct fulfilment of one prophetic verse. Not every LGBT person is an agent of eschatological deception. Not every institutional development proves that the rapture will occur on a human timetable.

Yet Scripture does connect the last days with deception, lawlessness, love of pleasure, a form of godliness without power, teachers gathered according to desire, and refusal to endure sound doctrine ([2 Timothy 3:1-5](#); [2 Timothy 4:1-5](#)). Readiness is therefore moral and doctrinal. A church that revises holiness to preserve approval is not preparing the Bride.

Rapture readiness is not prophetic excitement detached from the body. It means that the believer's eyes, bed, speech, relationships, money, media, and secret life are brought into the light. It means the heterosexual adulterer cannot hide behind opposition to LGBT theology. It means the affirming teacher cannot hide behind compassion. It means the celibate believer does not make suffering a licence to surrender. It means the family does not abandon the child. It means the pastor does not trade truth for institutional peace.

The midnight cry may come while churches are still debating whether the lamp requires oil. The wise response is not panic. It is obedience before the cry sounds.

To the sexually immoral: Christ still calls. End the affair. Leave the secret room. Confess the pornography. Stop using the body of another person to medicate loneliness. Do not wait for a more convenient season.

To the self-righteous: your contempt may expose that you have never understood grace. The public sinner and the respectable hypocrite both need mercy.

To the affirming minister: do not confuse applause with the Spirit's witness. Withdraw the blessing that God did not author. Return to the apostolic Word while repentance is still preached.

To the wounded person: the cruelty of Christians does not make Christ cruel. A hireling may have used His name, but the Shepherd knows His sheep. Bring your wounds into truthful care. Do not allow the sin committed against you to become the theology by which you reject the One who was wounded for sinners.

To the believer carrying unwanted desire: do not measure God's faithfulness by the speed with which temptation changes. Grace can sustain obedience in a body that still groans. Your struggle is not your only story. Your future is resurrection.

To the church: wash the robe. Remove predatory leaders. Restore discipline. Recover friendship. Honour marriage without idolising it. Honour singleness without romanticising loneliness. Protect children. Teach the whole counsel of God. Keep the lamp burning.

Conclusion: Love Does Not Rewrite the Beloved

The sexual revolution did not merely expand private choices. It changed the authority by which sex is interpreted. Desire became identity, authenticity became duty, recognition became justice, and nonaffirmation was increasingly classified as harm. When this anthropology entered the church, biblical texts were reread through a conclusion already established: love must affirm.

This chapter has argued that love cannot be detached from creation and truth. Humanity is made in God's image as male and female. Marriage is the one-flesh covenant of a man and a woman. Sexual holiness governs married and unmarried believers. The fall disorders every form of desire. The body belongs to the Lord and is destined for resurrection. The canonical witness concerning same-sex intercourse cannot reasonably be limited to rape, pederasty, cult prostitution, exploitation, or excessive lust. Ancient context matters, but it does not reverse the created pattern reaffirmed by Jesus and the apostles.

The strongest affirming arguments raise necessary questions. Churches have harmed people. Historical forms of same-sex exploitation differ from modern relationships. Mental-health disparities are real. Families can become places of rejection. Conservative hypocrisy is widespread. These facts require repentance, protection, careful evidence, ethical care, and truthful community. They do not authorise the church to call holy what Scripture calls believers to leave.

Queer theology can expose the instability of social conventions and the indecency of religious hypocrisy. It becomes revisionist when created distinctions are treated as oppressive constructions, transgression becomes revelatory, and salvation is relocated from forgiveness and sanctification to recognition and self-expression. Institutional liturgies, ordination policies, and educational systems then make revision durable by teaching the church to bless the autonomous self.

The biblical alternative is not cruelty. It is a community in which no sinner is beyond mercy, no temptation is made sovereign, no repentant person is imprisoned by the past, no single believer is treated as incomplete, no child is abandoned, no victim is silenced, no leader is protected from accountability, and no desire is placed above Christ.

Love does not rewrite the beloved. It tells the truth about the disease and remains beside the sufferer while the Physician heals. It refuses the mob's stones and also refuses the lie that there is no sin to leave. It protects dignity because the person bears God's image, and it calls for repentance because the person will stand before God.

The hour is late, but mercy is still announced. The water still washes. The Spirit still sanctifies. The name of Jesus still justifies. The Bridegroom still calls sinners into a holy people.

The next chapter follows the revolution into its wider institutional consequences. Sexual autonomy cannot remain confined to private desire. Once male and female embodiment, one-flesh marriage, and procreative meaning are detached from creation, the definitions of marriage, parenthood, childhood, education, reproduction, disability, life, and death must also be reconstructed. Chapter 10 therefore turns to the assault on created order across the whole human household.

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