

## The Restriction of a Christian Sexual Ethic

### **Introduction**

One of the most common charges brought against Christianity is that it must be false, or it must be unloving, because it is overly restrictive in the areas of sexuality and gender.

### **A quick summary of the biblical view of sexuality**

*Porneia* – “sexual immorality” – A broad, general term for any sexual activity outside of a monogamous, heterosexual marriage.

*Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman as defined by creation and biblical revelation. Such union involves a lifelong covenant for the purpose of intimate companionship, sexual expression, joy, and procreation of the human race. The marriage relationship mirrors the relationship between Christ and His Church, and thus any perversion of that picture obscures the glory of God displayed in the gospel. This meaning of marriage and sexuality is, thus, incompatible with homosexuality, transgenderism, polygamy, gender-fluidity, adultery, fornication, pornography, or any other distortion of the consistent teaching of Scripture as affirmed by the unanimous and long-standing tradition of the Church. –The Parkway Church, Statement of Faith*

### **A quick summary of the biblical view of sex and gender**

1. God created humanity into two, distinct biological sexes. *One’s biological sex is not determined by societal opinion, internal feeling, personal identification, or cultural understanding but rather by the way one’s body is arranged, from before birth, for the purposes of reproduction.* One can mutilate the body, but one’s sex cannot ever be changed. You will always be your original biological sex, even after the resurrection.
2. Additionally, men and women are to act in accordance with certain, biblical social differences (commonly called “gender”) concerning things such as roles in the home and in the church, how they look and dress, how they act, etc. The psychological diagnosis of “gender dysphoria” (when someone feels like they are a different gender than they really are) is a result of the fall.
3. Additionally, men and women are equal in value, essence, and dignity. That truth withstanding, men alone are called to the highest roles of leadership both in the home and in the church.

### **Current objections to Christianity based on our “restrictive” views of sexuality and gender**

The following is a list of cultural lies about sexuality and gender, followed by a refutation of those lies:

Lie 1. One can change their gender.

-This position is logically incoherent. For example, when someone says they want to transition to become a woman, they have to define what a “woman” is before they can know how to transition to become one. But if they define a woman as a something subjective (like a feeling) then the word “woman” has lost all meaning. If they define a woman objectively, then they must agree that there is a set definition on what a woman is and is not. What, exactly, is that universal definition?

- The claims of science have to be empirically proven and have to be falsifiable. There has to be a way to tell some people who think that they are transgender that they objectively are and other people who think that they are transgender that they objectively are not. But the movement has no scientific, objective standard to separate out who really is and who really is not transgender.

-Basing transgenderism on an internal feeling is certainly not scientific.

-If sex/gender is not based on your physical body, then why change your body at all? Conversely, if sex/gender is based upon your physical body then your body would give you an indicator of your true sex/gender.

-In the case of identical twins, why, sometimes, does one claim to be transgender and the other does not (when they come from the same genetic makeup)?

-Why can a person identify as another gender but not another race or age?

-The views of transgenderism is a contradiction to “gender-fluidity” and to those who don’t identify as any gender at all.

-If you were born a man, how would you know what it really felt like to be a woman? You could only feel like a “man-feeling-like-what-you-think-a-woman feels-like” but you could not actually feel like a woman.

Thomas Nagle and “What is it like to be a bat?”

Lie 2. One cannot change their sexual orientation.

-That claim conflicts with transgenderism.

-This claim is just not true. There are people who have literally changed their sexual preference (and even changed it back) over time.

-It is irrelevant to the claims of Christianity. Christianity doesn't say you have to get rid of the temptation to sin. It simply says you cannot act on it.

-Jesus can give you new desires.

Lie 3. There are more than two genders.

There are only two options regarding how your body is set up for the purpose of reproduction. There is no third option. This is the only consistent, physical, and scientifically verifiable way of defining male and female.

Lie 4. If a particular act happens in nature then it must be "natural" and, therefore, good.

-Nature has been affected by sin. The world is fallen. What is "natural" today is not what was natural originally.

-There are many evil things that happen in nature that we say are bad (mothers eat their young, male lions rape female lions, etc.).

-You cannot imply that something *should be* some way just because *it happens to be* that way. You cannot imply an "ought" from an "is."

Lie 5. One cannot (or it is unhealthy to) suppress their sexual urges.

-We suppress our sexual urges all the time (rape, adultery, etc.).

-It is unhealthy not to suppress sexual urges.

-Sex is not required to be healthy. Some people choose to be single and celibate.

-Christianity doesn't ask you to repress your sexual urges. It asks you to confess them to God and give him control of them. You don't push your desires down deep into your soul, you let go of them and hand them over to Jesus. *Repression is different than confession.*

Lie 6. I cannot change the things that I am attracted to.

-The Bible is not asking you to change your temptations. It is asking you not to act on them.

-God can deliver you from certain temptations, so that they are no longer a struggle for you.

-What you are attracted to is based on other things you think. Christianity demands that you change your entire worldview thus allowing you to better see evil desires for what they are.

Lie 7. It's mean, abusive, and unloving to say that someone's sexual preferences are wrong.

-Then it's mean, abusive, and unloving for you to say that my views are wrong.

-That's like saying it is mean, abusive, and unloving to tell someone that their desire for adultery or pedophilia is wrong.

-What is actually mean, abusive, and unloving to let someone continue in sin.

-The very reason people get offended if you correct their morality is because, deep down, they know what they are doing is wrong.

-We should all have the right to express how we feel to each other even if we disagree. Disagreement is not hate.

Lie 8. I can't not have sex.

-That's not true.

1 Corinthians 10:13 - No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

-Then get married!

1 Corinthians 7:2-5 - But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

1 Corinthians 7:9 - But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

Lie 9. Sexual acts are only wrong if they hurt someone or if it is not consensual.

-It does hurt someone.

Studies have shown that a non-biblical sexual ethic does mentally and sometimes physical hurt people. The rate of suicide among practicing homosexuals is higher than the national average (as is their chance of having an STD). The suicide rate among those who identify as transgender several times higher than the national average. Not to mention that adultery, incest, molestation, and even sex before marriage does emotionally hurt people. Having a sex-change operation or forcing a child to take hormone blockers can physically harm them and make them sterile for life. Pornography has led to increased rates of sexual abuse, rape, molestation, and pedophilia.

Also, helping someone sin against God causes great spiritual harm and pushes them further away from joy and salvation.

-A 60 old man in a sexual relationship with an underage boy may not think they are hurting anyone (and it may be consensual), but it is still wrong. Or imagine a brother and sister who consent to sexual relations with one another (and use protection so they do not conceive a child with genetic deficiencies). We would still say both of these acts are wrong.

-Something is not just wrong because we do or don't think it hurts someone.

Lie 10. If God made something feel good then it can be pursued however I want.

-You do not hold this view in other areas of your life. You don't say that just because killing someone is an "adrenaline rush" or punching someone you hate "feels good" then you can do it.

-God made things feel good to be pursued in the way he intended: Sex in marriage, money without greed, wine in moderation, etc.

Lie 11. Someone born with both male and female genitalia proves that sex is not binary.

This condition is called "intersex." It used to be called "hermaphroditism" but that term has fallen into disuse. About 1 in 20,000 people are born intersex. This could mean that they have a chromosomal abnormality (they are born XXY, etc.), they have trouble receiving testosterone, they have both male and female external genitalia, or a host of other conditions. What happens most often in this case is that the doctor identifies what the actual gender of the baby is and then performs surgery to address the abnormalities present.

It is important to note:

1. Someone who is born intersex is not a third sex. They are not "other." They are either male or female, and we can trace back the abnormality (what are called "disorders of sexual development" or "DSD") to find their actual

gender. This means that sex is still binary even if we have to do a little homework to find out which sex they are.

2. Those who are intersex most often *do not* identify as “transgender” but rather are happy with their actual physical sex and live accordingly.
3. The intersex condition means that gender fluidity is not true. Someone who is intersex is actually either male or female, *but they don't switch back and forth based upon an internal mental state.*
4. But the most powerful argument against transgenderism on this point is that intersex is a *physical* condition. The transgender movement states that transgenderism is an inner state or a social construct that is *not dependent* upon one's bodily sex. But in the case of intersex people we are only talking about bodily sex.

Lie 12. The Bible sets an impossible standard of sexual purity, therefore it must be false.

-On the one hand, that is not true regarding physical action. You can physically not commit adultery. You can physically not look at pornography, etc.

-On the other hand, it is true regarding our spiritual state. The Bible *does* set an impossible standard of sexual purity in that even to lust in our heart is to commit heart-level adultery.

-But that is why we need Jesus!

-This argument assumes that just because we fail at God's commands we are not held accountable to them. But that's the whole point of Christianity. We fail, and so we need a Savior who has not failed.