

Answering LGBTQIA+ Questions

1. Where Does the Bible Say Same-Sex Sex Is a Sin?

Direct Verses

There are five verses where the issue of same-sex sex is explicitly talked about:

Leviticus 18:22 (ESV)

"You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination."

Leviticus 20:13 (ESV)

"If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them."

Romans 1:26-27 (ESV)

"For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error."

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 (NET)

"Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived! The sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, passive homosexual partners*, practicing homosexuals**, thieves, the greedy, drunkards, the verbally abusive, and swindlers will not inherit the kingdom of God."

1 Timothy 1:9-10 (NET)

"We know that law is not intended for a righteous person, but for lawless and rebellious people, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, for the sexually immoral, practicing homosexuals, kidnappers, liars, perjurers—in fact, for any who live contrary to sound teaching."

* "passive homosexual partners" – in Koine Greek is *malakoi*. It generically means "soft one". It has a wide usage in Ancient Greek sources including Hypocrates himself. It was understood to be the passive sexual partner.

** "practicing homosexuals" in Koine Greek is *arsenokoitai*. It does not appear anywhere in Greek literature before Paul (found in 1 Corinthians 6 and in 1 Timothy 1). It appears to be a

coinage built directly from the LXX wording of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 (*arsenos... koitēn*, "male... bed"), which is itself a strong argument that Paul is consciously invoking the Levitical prohibition rather than borrowing from Greco-Roman vocabulary for pederasty (which had its own established terms, like *paiderastēs* or *paidophthoros*). When paired with *malakoi*, it denotes the active same-sex partner.

NOTE: In all 5 instances where same-sex sex is explicitly mentioned as a sin it is in a list of other sins. This shows us that same-sex sex is not a special sin, it is just a sin like the others. Nor is it a special exemption, for it is listed with other sins that we would still consider sins.

The Indirect Witness: *Porneia* and the Levitical Sex Code

Beyond these five direct texts, the New Testament repeatedly condemns "sexual immorality" - Greek *porneia* - as a category. It was a generic catch-all term at the time of Jesus and the Apostles for any sexual act outside of the marriage of a husband and wife. *porneia* functioned as shorthand for the whole catalog of forbidden sexual unions laid out in Leviticus 18 and 20 (incest, adultery, bestiality, and same-sex relations among them). This is well attested in Second Temple Jewish literature (e.g., the Damascus Document at Qumran uses *zenut*, the Hebrew equivalent, the same way) and in how the term is used across the NT — vice lists, warnings against *porneia*, and calls to "flee sexual immorality" occur dozens of times across the Gospels, Acts, Paul's letters, and Revelation. Every NT occurrence of *porneia* is, for a Torah-literate audience, an implicit reaffirmation of the entire Levitical sexual code.

2. Why is Sex Only for a Marriage of a Husband and Wife?

The Bible gives these reasons:

Creation — Sex within marriage reflects the created order itself. "So God created man in his own image... male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:27). The sexual union of a husband and wife isn't an add-on to creation — it's part of how God structured humanity from the start, and Jesus points straight back to this text when asked about marriage (Matthew 19:4-5).

Complementarity — "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him" (Genesis 2:18). Adam's response to Eve — "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" (Genesis 2:23) — is the Bible's picture of two distinct and different, yet complementary halves forming a whole. Sex is presented as the physical expression of that completing union, not a stand-alone appetite.

Covenant — "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). Malachi 2:14 calls marriage a

covenant witnessed by God himself. Sex is the covenant's consummating sign — which is exactly why Scripture treats sex outside that covenant bond (fornication, adultery) as a violation of something sacred, not just a rule broken. The aspect of “covenant” is often missing from most non-biblical world views on sex.

Children — "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth" (Genesis 1:28). The marital union is the God-given context for procreation and for raising the next generation within a stable, committed household — the two-parent, covenant-bonded family unit Scripture consistently assumes as the norm. This does not mean that every married couple will have kids, but only in a male-female union can children come about.

Christ — "This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church" (Ephesians 5:31-32). Marriage — including its sexual union — is meant to function as a living picture of Christ's covenant love for his people: exclusive, sacrificial, and permanent. It reflects different partners – Christ and his church. Sex outside that framework distorts the picture it's meant to display.

3. How Could Loving Someone Be a Sin? Didn't God Make Us Sexual Beings?

The biblical position isn't that sexuality itself is the problem — Genesis 1:31 calls the whole of creation, including human sexuality, "very good." God made humans embodied, desiring, relational creatures on purpose. The claim isn't "sexuality is bad" — it's that sexuality, like every good gift, has a design and a *telos* (purpose), and human flourishing is found in living according to that design rather than against it.

This is the same logic Scripture applies to every other appetite. Hunger is good; gluttony is its disordered expression. The desire for possessions is not inherently sinful; greed is. Attraction and desire are part of being human but lust is a sin (Matthew 5:27-28). An involuntary flicker of attraction is not itself sin. What Scripture calls sin is the *cultivated pursuit* of desire outside its created boundaries — whether that's heterosexual lust, adultery, or same-sex sexual activity. The person is not reduced to, or condemned for, having a body that desires; the ethical claim is about where desire is rightly enacted.

NOTE: There is an important distinction between sexual attraction and sexual behavior. In modern usage, homosexuality refers to one's sexual attraction. The bible's focus is on sexual behavior. These are distinct and different things. Experiencing same-sex attraction is not itself treated in Scripture as a chosen sin in the way that acting on it is.

4. Aren't the Verses About Same-Sex Sex in the Bible really About Pederasty and Pagan Worship?

The passages use generic words for male and female. They would include any male-on-male sex or female-on-female sex. They are not limited to just a particular kind of same-sex sex.

Leviticus 18:22 condemns both male partners. Romans 1 and 1 Timothy 1 say that it is a sin for both the passive and active same-sex partners. This would seem unfair in a pederasty kind of relationship where power dynamics are at play. Romans 1:26 explicitly includes *women* — "their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature" — describing female same-sex relations, which has no meaningful connection to Greco-Roman pederasty (an institution involving adult men and adolescent boys). If Paul were narrowly condemning exploitative age-structured relationships, it's difficult to explain why he includes women at all. The critique in Romans 1 is also explicitly grounded in *creation* ("contrary to nature," v. 26, echoing Genesis 1-2's male-female design) rather than in exploitation, consent, or power imbalance — the moral logic is about departure from created order, not abuse of a minor.

arsenokoitēs in 1 Corinthians 6:9 and 1 Timothy 1:10 is built from the Levitical vocabulary, not the vocabulary Greek writers used for pederasty specifically. If Paul wanted to condemn only pederasty, the Greek language had words ready for that; he coined a term rooted in the Holiness Code instead.

The Romans 1 passage is not exclusive to Pagan worship sex practices. The sins mentioned are not exclusive to Pagans, but are sins that can be committed by anyone.

5. The Ancient World Couldn't Conceive of Loving Same-Sex Relationships Like Today. So shouldn't we ignore those sections of the Bible because they are so out of date?

Ancient Jewish sources do refer to same-sex marriages.

The Sifra (a tannaitic halakhic midrash (Rabbinical commentary and interpretation of the Bible) on Leviticus, compiled roughly 2nd-4th century CE but preserving earlier tradition) comments on Leviticus 18:3 — "You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt... and you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan" — by cataloging what those forbidden practices included. Among the examples given: a man marrying a man, and a woman marrying a woman, described using actual marital/covenantal language (structured unions, not merely sexual acts).

The ancient rabbis were describing *formalized, marriage-like same-sex unions* as an existing practice among Israel's neighbors — meaning the concept of committed same-sex partnership is not a modern invention unavailable to the ancient mind. And having conceived of it clearly enough to name and describe it, the same tradition still classified it under "the ways of the nations" that Israel was commanded not to follow. The "they just couldn't imagine what we have today" argument doesn't hold up against this source — the argument from antiquity must be that the practice was known, or at least conceived of, and rejected, not that it was unknown.

Some will argue that there is no direct evidence that the Canaanites or Egyptians practices same-sex marriages other than the Rabbis commentary on Leviticus. While that may be true, the point remains, ancient Jewish Rabbis could indeed conceive of same-sex sex and still said it was a sin.

6. Jesus Never Mentions Same-Sex Sex — Doesn't That Mean We Should Just Follow His Command to Love one another?

Jesus's silence on a specific sexual practice, in a first-century Jewish teaching context, does not function as silence in the way modern readers often assume. Jesus repeatedly condemns *porneia* by name (Matthew 15:19, Mark 7:21) as one of the things that defiles a person "from within" — and, *porneia* (sexual immorality) was not a vague term to a Torah-formed audience. It was the standing category for the entire Levitical sexual code. A first-century Jewish teacher invoking *porneia* was not leaving a gap for his hearers to fill in later; he was pointing at a body of law his audience already knew by heart. So, Jesus did in fact condemn same-sex sex, along with all the other sexual sins in the Levitical sex code when he spoke of *porneia* (sexual immorality).

In Jesus' statement on the design of marriage in Matthew 19:4-6, he grounds marriage directly in Genesis 1:27 and 2:24 — "male and female," becoming "one flesh" — in the course of a teaching on divorce. When Jesus does engage the topic of marriage directly, he reaffirms rather than revises the creation pattern.

So the "he never mentioned it, therefore silence equals permission" argument requires reading Jesus's *porneia* statements as somehow not including what his entire audience understood them to include — which is a harder case to make than it first appears, not an easier one.

7. Aren't We Under the New Covenant — Don't We Not Follow Old Testament Laws on Sex Anymore?

The answer requires distinguishing between the *civil/ceremonial* law given to Israel as a nation and the *moral* law that reflects God's unchanging character — a distinction the church has made historically since at least Aquinas.

But you don't have to rely only on that theological framework here, because the New Testament settles the question directly. In Acts 15, the Jerusalem council convenes specifically to determine what parts of Mosaic law apply to Gentile believers who are *not* being asked to keep the whole Torah, including circumcision. Their decree instructs Gentile Christians to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from what has been strangled, and explicitly — "from sexual immorality" (*porneia*, Acts 15:20, 29). This list closely tracks the restrictions Leviticus 17-18 places specifically on the *ger* — the resident alien living among Israel (see Leviticus 17:8-10, 12-13; 18:26) — which is a strong signal that the apostles are consciously drawing on that same Levitical material as still binding for Gentile believers, even while explicitly *not* requiring the ceremonial law (circumcision, dietary code generally).

In other words: the apostles themselves, at the very moment they're relieving Gentiles of most Mosaic law, single out *porneia* — including the Levitical sexual prohibitions — as still binding.

8. Leviticus Commands the Killing of Homosexuals — Why Don't Christians Do This? Isn't it hypocritical for them not to do so?

Three separate answers here, and they need to be kept distinct.

The church is not a civil government.

Israel under Moses was a covenant nation with its own judiciary and civil penalties. The church exists under the New Covenant as a world-wide spiritual community without magisterial authority to execute Mosaic civil law — this is why Christians don't stone adulterers, execute Sabbath-breakers (Numbers 15:32-36), or disown rebellious children (Deuteronomy 21:18-21) either, despite all of these carrying the same capital sanction in the Torah. Applying Israel's civil penal code today would require applying it consistently across dozens of offenses no church does — which shows the church has never actually operated as though Mosaic civil law transfers directly.

Further, the church rather than calling for the killing of those who had practiced same-sex sex who had repented, accepted them into the church as believers who had left their sins behind.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 (NET)

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived! The sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, passive homosexual partners, practicing homosexuals ¹⁰thieves, the greedy, drunkards, the verbally abusive, and swindlers will not inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹Some of you once lived this way. 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.

[There's no record this penalty was ever carried out.](#)

No biblical narrative, extrabiblical inscription, or archaeological find documents an execution under Leviticus 20:13 anywhere in Israel's history. Why not? See below.

["Maximum penalty" language in ANE law does not mean that was the actual sentence.](#)

Ancient Near Eastern law codes, including Israel's, frequently state a theoretical maximum penalty while ransom or lesser compensation was the normal practical outcome. Exodus 21:29-30 makes this explicit for one case: an ox's owner liable for a goring death "shall be put to death" — unless "a ransom is imposed on him," in which case "he shall pay whatever is imposed on him." Notably, Numbers 35:31 explicitly *forbids* ransom in the one case where it clearly did not apply — murder — which is best read as an exception that proves ransom was the assumed default option elsewhere, not the rule. Later rabbinic tradition reinforces this same pattern: the Mishnah (Makkot 1:10) records rabbis calling a court that executed even one person in seventy years a "bloody" court, reflecting an evidentiary and procedural bar so high (multiple eyewitnesses, prior warning, and more) that capital punishment functioned more as a statement of the gravity of an offense than as routinely enforced criminal law.

For a death sentence to occur there had to be multiple witnesses and the judge had to agree that the sentence was appropriate. Rarely, were death sentences given in Israel.

9. Doesn't Calling Same-Sex Sex a Sin Drive LGBTQIA+ People Toward Suicide — How Is That Loving?

Speaking the truth does not mean you want someone to die.

Elevated suicide risk among LGBTQ+ youth is well documented in the research literature and care should be given in how we engage with persons with same-sex attraction.

Love and truth-telling are not opposites in Scripture — silence is not automatically kindness.

If you care about someone you will tell them the truth. If you care only about yourself you will tell them what they want to hear or say nothing.

We have a biblical obligation to tell people the truth, but it must be done so in love.

Ephesians 4:15 (ESV)

"Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,"

Colossians 4:6 (ESV)

"Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person."

Proverbs 27:6 (EASY)

"You can trust a friend when he says things that hurt you. But when an enemy kisses you, he is deceiving you."

Do we have an obligation to say something?

Ezekiel 3:18-21 (ESV)

If I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, in order to save his life, that wicked person shall die for^f his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. ¹⁹ But if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, or from his wicked way, he shall die for his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul. ²⁰ Again, if a righteous person turns from his righteousness and commits injustice, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die. Because you have not warned him, he shall die for his sin, and his righteous deeds that he has done shall not be remembered, but his blood I will require at your hand. ²¹ But if you warn the righteous person not to sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live, because he took warning, and you will have delivered your soul."

11. How Should the Church Respond to the LGBTQIA+ Community Today?

Sexual sins are not special sins

This means we show the same love and kindness to all who struggle with sin. Love is the universal starting point for believers in helping those struggling with sin. Everywhere the bible mentions same-sex sex specifically it is in a list of other sins. These sins vary from list to list. This suggests that same-sex sex is not a worse sin than other sins. It also suggests that same-sex sex is not a special exemption either – for it is called sin just like all the other sins listed with it.

The church should not affirm sin

1 Corinthians 5 addresses the situation where the church was boasting about how loving and tolerant they were to a Christian believer's sexual sins. Paul said this:

“It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. ²And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? ...⁶Your boasting is not good.

.Paul makes a distinction between believers and unbelievers in 1 Corinthians 5 and in how we approach them. We should not expect unbelievers to act like believers and should still actively engage with them. This doesn't mean telling them that God approves of sin, but we should treat them as we would any other person.

1 Corinthians 5 calls us to challenge the believer more directly. An important principle to keep in mind is that “Attendance is not Allegiance”. Just because someone is attending a church and claims to be a believer, does not mean that they have given their full allegiance to Christ and are following him. Our goal is to help redirect the brother to live a committed Christian life. And may require uncomfortable conversations, church discipline, and possibly even distancing ourselves from them if they continue to live an unrepentant sinful lifestyle while claiming that it is OK with God for them to do this (Read 1 Corinthians 5).

In all things though, our motivation must be love, seeking for our fellow believers to have full allegiance to him.

Galatians 6:1-2 (ESV)

"Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

Colossians 2:12-13 (ESV)

"Put on then... compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another... forgiving each other."

If someone claiming to be a Christian is living in open sexual sin, as was the case in 1 Corinthians 5, and they are not repentant or trying to change, the church should follow the biblical guidelines for church discipline. Punishment is not the goal – helping the person to see just how destructive their sin is to them, and to the witness of the body of Christ. The goal is always to restore the person, not to condemn them.

12. How do I respond to my friend who wants me to use pronouns that don't match their biological gender?

A Christian response to the issue of using pronouns that do not match someone's biological sex can affirm the foundational beliefs about truth, love, and respecting each person as made in God's image, while also holding to convictions about gender as revealed in Scripture.

Biblical Issues

- Scripture teaches that God created humanity male and female (Genesis 1:27), and many Christians believe that using pronouns inconsistent with biological sex affirms something contrary to God's revealed order.

So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. – Genesis 1:27 (NIV)

"God saw all that he had made, and it was very good" – Genesis 1:31

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. ¹⁴I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. ¹⁵My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. ¹⁶Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. – Psalms 139:13-16 (NIV)

"Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female – Matthew 19:4 (NIV)

- Christians are called to "speak the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15), which means not affirming what they believe is untrue, but always doing so with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15). It has been said that if you care about someone, you will tell them the truth, if you care about yourself, you'll tell them what they want to hear.

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. – Ephesians 4:15 (NIV)

But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect – 1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)

- Using preferred pronouns may feel like condoning or participating in something considered false according to the Bible, like affirming other actions or beliefs not aligned with Scriptural truth (Romans 1:32; Acts 5:29).

Romans 1:18-32 discusses how people grow to embrace sexual expressions that are at conflict with what He has said. Verse 32 warns us not to condone or support those who do this.

- Biblical love does not mean agreeing with or affirming everything about a person. True love sometimes requires disagreement and even challenge when beliefs or actions are seen as inconsistent with God's will (Proverbs 27:5; 1 Corinthians 13:6).

It is better to correct someone openly than to have love and not show it. – Proverbs 27:5 (NCV)

Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. – 1 Corinthians 13:6 (NIV)

Personal Response Example

It is possible to respond to a friend in a way that combines honesty, humility, and love. A suggested approach could be:

“You matter deeply to me, and I value our friendship a lot. I want you to know that my hesitation to use certain pronouns isn’t about disrespect or dislike, but comes from my personal conviction that God created us either male or female, and that to refer to someone according to a different gender than they were born with feels dishonest to what I believe. I understand this may be hurtful, and that’s not what I want. Please know I am committed to being kind, caring, and supportive in every way I can, even if we see this issue differently. For me, loving someone doesn’t always mean agreeing, and I hope we can respect each other’s convictions as we continue our friendship.”

Addressing Love and Disagreement

- True love—as taught by Jesus—means willingness to sacrifice, to serve, and sometimes to challenge, not simply to affirm.
- The Bible models situations where believers are called to love even their enemies and disagree respectfully (Matthew 5:44; Romans 12:18).

- Seeking to honor God and speak truth is not incompatible with pursuing genuine friendships across sharp disagreements.
- Ultimately, Christians are called to reflect both the unwavering truth and deep compassion exemplified by Christ, even when it brings personal discomfort or misunderstanding.

In summary, a faithful response can combine **conviction with compassion**, communicating both the desire to honor God's design for humanity and a sincere commitment to peacefully, lovingly, and respectfully walk alongside friends—even in disagreement.

1. <https://www.gotquestions.org/transgender-pronouns.html>
2. <https://answersingenesis.org/blogs/ken-ham/2023/05/08/should-we-use-transgender-pronouns/>
3. <https://www.theshepherds.church/blog/pronouns-and-the-christian>
4. <https://www.str.org/w/problems-with-preferred-pronouns>
5. <https://www.christianitytoday.com/2023/08/should-christians-offer-preferred-gender-pronouns/>

13. How Should Christians Respond to Someone Who Feels They Are Transgender?

As Christians, our first response should be one of love, compassion, and listening. Someone who experiences gender dysphoria is often carrying deep emotional pain, confusion, or isolation. Before offering answers, we should seek to understand their story and demonstrate the love of Christ. Every person is made in the image of God and deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.

The Bible teaches that God intentionally created humanity as male and female (Genesis 1:27). Our biological sex is not an accident but part of God's good design. Because of the Fall, however, every part of our lives—including our thoughts, emotions, desires, and sense of identity—has been affected by sin and brokenness. Christians recognize that people can sincerely experience feelings that do not always align with God's design, whether those feelings involve anger, fear, sexual temptation, or gender dysphoria.

Some point to Deuteronomy 22:5, where God prohibits a man from dressing as a woman and a woman from dressing as a man.

“A woman shall not wear a man's garment, nor shall a man put on a woman's cloak, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God. – Deuteronomy 22:5 (ESV)

Since the Bible also says that God doesn't look on the outward appearance but the heart, we must recognize that God isn't primarily concerned about how we look. It is the heart issues that He is focused on. While clothing styles themselves vary from culture to culture, the underlying principle is that God values the distinction He created between male and female. The issue is not that God is concerned with a particular style of clothing; rather, He is concerned with the heart and with honoring the identity He has given us. Brown argues that this passage reflects a broader biblical concern for preserving God's created distinctions, not enforcing arbitrary fashion rules. ([Truth Network](#))

Throughout Scripture, God consistently calls His people to embrace the identity He has given them. This is true not only of our sex but also of our calling as His children. We find our deepest identity not in our feelings, achievements, or personal perceptions, but in our relationship with our Creator. While our feelings are real and should never be dismissed, they do not ultimately define who we are. God lovingly calls us to trust Him, even when doing so is difficult.

This does not mean the Christian life is easy. Following Jesus often involves surrendering desires or feelings that conflict with God's will. Yet the gospel offers hope: Christ meets us in our brokenness, gives us grace to walk faithfully, and promises that our identity is ultimately found in Him. As Christians, we should therefore speak the truth with humility while extending the same compassion and patience that God has shown to us. As Ephesians 4:15 reminds us, we are to be "speaking the truth in love."

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