

GOD'S PLAN FOR SEX AND GENDER: 10 TEACHING POINTS FOR HOME AND CHURCH

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As parents and youth workers, we must use our voices to teach our children and teens what God really did say if we hope to help them find their way through the cultural narrative's lies on sex and gender.



Our children and teens are being educated on matters of sex and gender by a current cultural narrative that engages in 24/7 messaging, even to children as young as pre-school age.

This education – or more accurately *mis-education* – takes God's good gifts of sex and gender and distorts them in ways that undo God's grand and glorious plan for our children and teens. The reality is that whoever speaks to a child first about sex and gender will set the bar for what is understood to be true, resulting in everything they hear after that being measured in light of whatever they heard first. Consequently, we must speak up first and teach them the truth. We live in a day-and-age where home and church must faithfully offer biblically-based correctives to the cultural narrative on sex and gender.

Paul Tripp has said that the Bible's four most important words about sex and gender are these: "In the beginning

God. . ." (Genesis 1:1). This establishes God as the maker of all things, including sex and gender. He declared all things "good", while establishing a purpose and plan for all things, including sex and gender. But very quickly, the first four words spoken by the enemy of God – "Did God really say. . . ?" (Genesis 3:1) - led our first parents into questioning God's love and authority. They then chose to rebel against God by going their own way rather than His way. This choice to sin against God resulted in the corruption of God's good creation, which immediately undid everything good. . . including sex and gender. Satan continues to undo God's order and design through never-ending shouts and whispers to all of us, pointing us to choose our plan for sex and gender rather than God's plan, fueling our doubt of God's Word by continually asking us, "Did God really say. . . ?"





GOD'S PLAN FOR SEX AND GENDER

As parents and youth workers, we must use our voices to teach our children and teens what God *really* did say if we hope to help them find their way through the cultural narrative's lies on sex and gender. Here are 10 truths on sex and gender from God's Word we must continually teach and talk about with our children and teens. While not exhaustive on the matter of sex and gender, they are foundational to setting our kids on a lifetime journey of glorifying God through knowing and doing His will for sex and gender. Each truth is stated as a brief sentence. The descriptions that follow each are included to help you unpack and explain God's revealed will on sex and gender.

10 Teaching Points

1. God is our loving authority on sex and gender.

As Christians, we are called to follow the way and will of God as contained in the Bible, which is the Word of God revealed and written as God's authoritative rule for all matters of faith and practice. The Bible is the Christian's authority. The culture teaches that we are to live under no other authority except the authority of ourselves. The cultural mantras "you do you" and "follow your heart" teach us to live under the authority of our own personal desires, feelings, and intuition. But God calls us to deny ourselves and our untrustworthy intuitions, and instead live under His loving and life-giving authority. God tells us that our hearts are not to be trusted (Jeremiah 17:9). We should never allow our feelings to dictate and misshape our understanding of truth. The Bible is God's gift to us which teaches God's plan, purpose, will and way for how things are supposed to be. We are to believe and behave in ways that are firmly rooted in biblical truth (2 Timothy 3:10-17). Judge your feelings by Scripture, rather than judging Scripture by your feelings.

2. All people are made by God in His image.

The Bible teaches us that every human being is a divine image-bearer, full of God-given value, dignity, and worth (Genesis 1:26-31). Because of this, every human being must be shown compassion, love, kindness, and respect. When we choose to follow God's will and way on matters of sex and gender, we may look down upon and lack compassion for those who choose to live according to the culture's narrative on sex and gender. Those who choose to live sinfully under their own "you do you" and "follow your heart" authority, feelings, and intuition should be treated with the same compassion,

patience, and grace that Jesus Christ has shown to us, as we too are sinners. Hateful, harassing, and shaming attitudes and behavior directed toward any individual or group is to be rejected as sin against God. And, we must remember that using our faculties of judgement to exercise discernment between right and wrong is appropriate and wise (Philippians 1:9-10), while judgement that leads to condemnation is not our business, but God's alone. The most loving thing we can do for another is to show grace while *also* telling the truth. . . even when that truth is a hard truth.

3. God has given us His order and design for sex and gender at Creation.

God's order and design for human sexuality, marriage, and gender is clearly stated in the Creation narrative (Genesis 1 & 2), reflected in the teachings of Jesus Christ (Matthew 19:4-6), and is maintained consistently throughout the Bible. If we want to know what it means to be human. . . to be *fully* human. . . we find that plan and purpose "In the beginning. . ." This order and design serves as our pattern for living today.

4. Human sin has corrupted everything, including sex and gender.

Because of human kind's rebellion against God and fall into sin, everything and everyone are broken. The disobedience of our first parents in the Garden of Eden has corrupted and poisoned our human nature, and our default setting is to rebel against God in our thoughts, our words, and our actions (Romans 3:10, 23; Romans 5:12, 18-19). We are all natural born sinners. Just like he did with our first parents in the Garden of Eden, the wrecker of this world (Satan) comes to us desiring to keep us from understanding and pursuing things as they are supposed to be. Satan wants us to cooperate with him in the destruction of God's good order and design wherever that exists. . . including our understanding of sex and gender. And just as he did in Genesis 3:1, Satan continues to get us to question, doubt, and turn from God's order and design by getting us to distrust God's authority. He deceives us, getting us to believe and live out lies so that all Creation and our own lives come undone. On gender, sex and everything else Satan poses this doubt-inducing question: "Did God really say. . . ?" Ultimately Satan will do anything he can to convince us to join him in his rebellion against God, including choosing against God's design for sex and gender.



God has given humanity the good and beautiful gift of sex to be shared and experienced only within the context of marriage between one man and one woman.

5. God's will and way for gender is clear.

God has revealed His grand and glorious plan for humanity in the Creation account which is found in Genesis 1 and 2 (as stated in teaching point #3). What is that plan? We need to know that everything God created He stamped as "good!" But when He finished creating human beings He said "very good!" And what He pronounced as "very good!" was male and female, the binary genders He designed and assigned. . . male and female only, that are both fully human and equal in dignity. Our first parents, Adam and Eve, were given complementary biological forms and purposes so that they might work together to care for God's good creation, to be fruitful, and to multiply. God gave each of us sex organs (and even genes in our DNA!) that tell us what gender we are, either male or female. This is the way things are supposed to be. Jesus affirms this in Matthew 19:4 when He says, "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female?" Because of this, rejecting God's design and attempting to alter one's biological sex as established before birth is a rejection of the image of God within us, and rebellion against God. To do so undermines one's humanity and diminishes one's flourishing.

6. God's design for sex and marriage is clear.

God has established marriage to be a covenantal, life-long, monogamous, one-flesh, heterosexual union between one man and one woman. God has given humanity the good and beautiful gift of sex to be shared

and experienced *only* within the context of marriage between one man and one woman. Marriage is the place for sex. The purpose of sex as God has given it to us is to consummate and seal the marriage relationship between a man and a woman, to foster continued mutual intimacy, to enable mutual pleasure, and to respond to God's command to "be fruitful and multiply" (procreation). God calls us to chastity in singleness, and faithfulness in marriage.

7. God recognizes that we will all struggle at some level with sex and gender.

God knows that we are *all* sinners. We must recognize that due to sin and brokenness in the world, *all* human beings will struggle personally with sexual brokenness, and that we will encounter difficult temptations to wander from God's will and way for sex and gender. God makes it clear that any form of sexual immorality (including but not limited to adultery, fornication, LGBTQ+ behavior, bestiality, incest, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, sexting, sex trafficking, polyamory, objectification, and the use of pornography) is sinful, outside of God's plan, and harmful to one's self and others.

8. God uses our sex and gender struggles for His glory and our good.

We must understand that our own personal experience of sex and gender is not always that which God the Creator originally designed and intended. *All* of us live with broken and misplaced desires as they relate to sex and gender. While these are difficult and sometimes strong,



we are to endeavor to glorify God and experience the fullness of our humanity by living out biblical faithfulness in all areas of our lives, including sex and gender. In so doing, we recognize that when God does not rescue us from battling these broken desires, He is at work to redeem us and to walk with us through our struggles.

9. God is with us and there is help for you when you struggle with sex and gender.

In Romans 7, the Apostle Paul tells us about his first-hand struggle with sin. His struggle is so great that he even cries out, "What a wretched man that I am!" But he also knows *who* and *where* to run to as he struggles with his sin. He asks, "Who will deliver me from this body of death?" And then he gives us the answer: "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" God is with us in all our struggles with sin. That's why we can never stop running to Him. Never stop immersing yourself in God's Word. Run to it. Live in it. Engage with it when you are alone and when you are with your Christian friends. Whenever you feel Satan trying to derail you by getting you to question what God has really said, run... RUN! ... to Jesus and God's Word to remind yourself of what God has *really* said. There is grace, strength, hope and forgiveness for all who turn from their sin and put their trust in Jesus Christ.

If you are currently struggling to navigate issues of sexuality and gender, don't despair. You are not alone... either in your experience or in your effort to navigate your feelings and confusion. God is not calling you to walk through this alone. Go to a trusted Christian adult (parent, youth pastor, pastor, etc.) who will not only listen to you, pray for you, and guide you, but who can connect you with a qualified Christian counselor who can help you get answers to your questions on sex and gender, and walk with you through your struggle.

10. God provides hope as we wait for our struggles to end!

The good news is that God in His grace offers redemption and restoration to all those who confess and turn from their sexual sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. And, we know that living the life of Christian discipleship in this still-sin-marred now-but-not-yet-fully-realized Kingdom of God is always difficult, requires sacrifice, and involves some level of continued self-denial and struggle for all. Yet, as disciples of Jesus Christ we live and struggle with great hope as we expectantly wait for that final full rescue and restoration from whatever unique forms of sexual brokenness we experience when Jesus Christ comes again to restore all things for all eternity... including sex and gender! (Revelation 21 and 22).

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Additional Recommended Resources:

God Made Boys and Girls: Helping Children

Understand the Gift of Gender, by Marty Machowski (a children's book).

Gender: A Conversation Guide For Parents and Pastors, by Brian Seagraves and Hunter Leavine

God and the Transgender Debate: What Does The Bible Actually Say About Gender Identity?, by Andrew T. Walker

God, You, & Sex: a Profound Mystery, by David White

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

Alive: Gospel Sexuality For Students, Harvest USA

Harvestusa.org – a website for parents to help you navigate issues of sexuality and gender.



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For additional information or resources to help kids navigate their sexuality, visit the website of the Center for Parent/Youth Understanding at www.cpyu.org.

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