

# Session 11 – I’m a Christian. Now What?

What is to be expected of by those who have previously lived a homosexual lifestyle once they come to Christ? What is expected of me as a Christian?

It is important to remember that when someone comes to Christ, there is a process of sanctification taking place. It is unrealistic to expect for all sinful desires to be immediately removed, but the key now is to rely on the help of Holy Spirit to resist those desires.

## Titus 2:11-14

*<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. <sup>12</sup> It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, <sup>13</sup> while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, <sup>14</sup> who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.*

While Holy Spirit empowers us to reject those ungodly temptations, it does not guarantee that they will be altogether removed. In fact, it is possible that even a born-again Christian may have same sex attraction (SSA) for the rest of their lives. It is important to remember that SSA is not a sin; acting upon those sinful temptations is sinful.

Many who are coming out of a homosexual lifestyle are faced with some difficult decisions, some of which we will address here. **Suppose you are in a homosexual relationship when you get saved, what are you supposed to do about that relationship?**

**Suppose you are in a homosexual marriage when you get saved, what are you supposed to do about that marriage?** We are given many clear commands in Scripture regarding divorce. “God hates divorce” (Mal. 2:16). And Jesus was quite specific about the grounds for divorce in Matthew 19. Biblically, there are very few reasons where divorce is acceptable. **So, should we encourage a homosexual marriage to divorce? If so, are we encouraging them to commit one sin (divorce) so as not to commit another (homosexuality)?**

We must remember that marriage is ultimately not a determination of the state or government but rather a covenant relationship set up by God. Thus, the government is not the determiner of marriage, at least from a moral or Godly standpoint. Even though a court system or society may officially and culturally recognize homosexual marriages as legitimate, they are not in the eyes of God. Scripture is clear that marriage, in the eyes of God, is only possible through the union of one man and one woman. A homosexual “marriage” does not meet those requirements. Thus, while in the eyes of the state two men may be “married” and thus capable of “divorce,” this is not so in the eyes of God. So in actuality, the homosexual couple who divorces in order to stop engaging in homosexuality is not violating any of God’s commandments. In God’s eyes, there is not divorce taking place. Thus, we should always encourage those in homosexual relationships to leave them upon their commitment to Christ.

At the same time, we must be willing to extend grace to these situations. In some cases, these people have been married for decades. This would be an incredibly difficult decision to make,

and we must lovingly walk through these difficult times with people who are coming out of those sinful relationships in order to faithfully serve Christ.

This scenario becomes even more complicated when children are involved, yet the result must be the same. Even though the pain caused to the children may be great, it is not worth it to continue in sin in order to assuage the feelings of the children. Furthermore, the best thing for those children is to be in a home that glorifies God and pursues righteousness, modeled by their parents; this is impossible in a homosexual marriage. As for the specifics of what happens to those children, those would be done on a case-by-case basis, but hopefully it is possible for the children to have relationship with both of their “parents,” though we would prioritize them being in the Christian environment.

Let us take these hypothetical situations further. **Suppose transgender persons who have NOT had reconstructive surgery done become Christians. What should they do? Do they need to change their name back to the name of their original sex? Do they need to start looking/dressing/acting like their birth sex? Or can they faithfully serve God looking/acting transgender but not acting upon those things sexually?**

We are all uniquely created in the “image of God” in the way that He designed us to be. Transgenderism is an assault on God’s design and thus, any transgender person should strive to look and act and be the way that God intended for them to be. So yes, transgender people should have names, clothing and actions that are consistent with their God-given sex. Again, this would be a difficult process and it is important for the Church to practically assist in this process. Could we not provide money to help the woman who will stop being a man to become a woman once again? We should buy her new clothing. We should buy her makeup (and perhaps teach her to use it). We should assist those who are trying to live out their Christian faith well.

**What about those who have had reconstructive surgery to alter their gender? Is it necessary for them to have surgery to “correct” what they have done previously?** Once again, we should help our fellow believers to be the way that God has intended for them to be, even if this means an expensive surgery. I would suggest it is not necessary to have surgery done in order to faithfully follow Jesus, but I would imagine it would be very difficult to view yourself as the sex that God created you to be if you had the constant reminder of your old, sinful way of life every time you viewed your own body.

**Now what is to be done for a SSA person who comes to the Lord and still has those same SSA feelings?**

1. Pray for a supernatural miracle. It is certainly within the character and nature of our God to perform miracles, and it is no difficult thing for our God to change the desires of SSA person into heterosexual desires. Certainly the God who parts the Red Sea, shuts the mouths of lions and raises the dead is capable of transforming the desires of a SSA person.

**Psalm 37:4**

*“Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.”*

Since we know that the Lord would not encourage us to engage in homosexual behavior, then this verse can become a beautiful faith verse for the SSA person, that if they will delight themselves in the Lord, and pursue Christ, then the Lord will grant them the desires of *their* heart, thus demonstrating that the desires of their heart have changed to match God's.

That being said, it is possible that one may have SSA temptations until they day they die, just as many of us deal with heterosexual temptations or alcoholic temptations or hatred temptations, but by the grace of God, we reject them and follow Christ faithfully.

2. We pursue Jesus and healthy Christian relationships. It is not healthy to force those coming out of homosexual relationships into romantic heterosexual relationships. I would not suggest that one should marry someone of the opposite sex in hopes that it will “cure” their homosexual feelings; this is the wrong motivator for marriage. The cure for SSA is not forcing heterosexual relationships and feelings upon that person, but the cure is the same as it is for any sin/temptation: Jesus. Encourage them to passionately pursue Jesus and in so doing, it may be that those healthy heterosexual relationships occur.

3. Singleness. Marriage is a gift instituted by God. We should not feel guilty for wanting a romantic relationship, the companionship that comes with marriage or the pleasures of sex within marriage; these are all godly desires. But marriage is not essential to our salvation, nor is it essential to a fulfilled life, and it is possible that for some who are coming out of homosexual lifestyles, that the Lord may be calling them to a life of singleness. This could be a product of the fact that they continually live with those SSA feelings and thus do not feel it would be healthy to be in a heterosexual marriage. But singleness is not just for those with SSA. God calls all people to different things and we should not view a single person is simply one who has no heterosexual feelings.

Some argue, “So are you telling the SSA that they can never experience love?” Well first of all, if the only “love” that you experience is in the context of a romantic, sexual relationship, then you need to find a new Church and new friends. The Body of Christ should provide us with many good, loving relationships outside of those found in a marriage.

Secondly, though, I think the question is not “Are you telling the SSA person they can never be in a sexual relationship if they follow Christ?” but rather, “Is Jesus not worth sacrificing your sexual desires in order to serve Him?” If a SSA person refuses to give up their marriage or sexual desires for Christ, then they do not deserve Christ.

### **Matthew 19:11-12**

*Jesus replied, “Not everyone can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given. <sup>12</sup> For there are eunuchs who were born that way, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by others—and there are those who choose to live like eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it.”*

In the eyes of Jesus, it is not a bad thing to be single, in fact, some will be asked by God to be single “for the sake of the kingdom of Heaven.” The gift of celibacy is not something to be

dreaded but to be received with joy, and for the person who receives this calling, the grace and joy to walk in it will also be given.

Some argue that the Christian with SSA feelings cannot fully experience what it is to be human in the context of a human sexual relationship, that they are somehow missing out on something. And yet the greatest human who has ever lived, Jesus, never once engaged in a romantic or sexual relationship. If Jesus was single, then let us not insult such a designation. The Apostle Paul lauded singleness, seeing it as a benefit to the Kingdom of God.

Lastly, it is important to note that following Jesus does require sacrifice. We will all be asked to give up many things for the sake of Christ.

**Mark 10:29-30**

*<sup>29</sup> “Truly I tell you,” Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel <sup>30</sup> will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—along with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life.*

Whatever things we may be asked to give up to follow Jesus, pale in comparison to what He gave up for us, and they will be far surpassed by what we will gain not only in this life, but also in the next.