

Student Ministry Leaders Roundtable 2025

Tate Cockrell, PhD

Session 1 - Understanding Sexuality & Gender Identity Struggles

God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. **Genesis 1:27**

And He answered and said, "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate." **Matthew 19:4-6**

A. Important Terms

- **Sex** – biological makeup of individuals. Men XY Chromosomes and Women XX Chromosomes. Also, primary (reproductive systems) and secondary (general physical) sex characteristics.
- **Gender** - culturally appropriate expression of one's sex.
- **Gender Binary** - classification of sex and gender into two distinct and opposite forms of masculine and feminine
- **Same Sex Attraction** – An inclination or attraction toward members of the same sex
- **Homosexuality** – The practice of sexual acts between members of the same sex
- **Gay** – The adoption of a homosexual identity and lifestyle.
- **Gender identity** —an individual's personal sense of identity as masculine or feminine, or some combination of each.
- **Gender Dysphoria** - People who experience distress, anguish, and conflict from their perceived gender identity
- **Cisgender** —people who have a match between the gender they were assigned at birth, their bodies, and their personal identity.
- **Transgenderism** — An umbrella term for the state or condition of identifying or expressing a gender identity that does not match a person's physical/ genetic sex.

B. Distinguishing Between Sin and Temptation

- It is important to distinguish between _____ and temptation/attraction.
- Homosexuality / transgenderism are _____.
- Same-sex attraction / gender dysphoria are _____ / _____.
 - James 1:14-15 - But each person is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own evil desire. Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death.

C. Understanding the Progression of Cultural Brokenness (Romans 1:18-32)

- Rejection of God's _____
- Idolatry and _____ Worship
- Moral Depravity and _____ Immorality
- Debased Mind and Social _____
- Approval and Institutionalization of _____

D. Orienting Your Own Heart about Sexual and Gender Identity

- Sacrificial _____
 - John 13:34-5 - A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.
 - Your love for others must be your guide when _____ with people who struggle.
- Godly _____
 - Gen 1:26-27 - Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, the whole earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth." So God created man in his own image; he created him in the image of God, he created them male and female.
 - Just because you don't understand it, doesn't mean that their struggle is _____ than yours.
- Compassionate _____
 - Gal 6:2 - Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.
 - Imagine your world being _____ and your way of life being _____.
- Spirit-Guided _____
 - 1 Cor 13:4 - Love is patient
 - The pacing of your confrontation must be _____ by the Spirit of God and not your own wisdom.
- Healthy _____
 - 1 Corinthians 11:1 - Imitate me, as I also imitate Christ.
 - Healthy peer based relationships can be powerful motivators for _____.
- Authentic _____
 - Romans 12:9-16 - Love must be without hypocrisy. Detest evil; cling to what is good. Show family affection to one another with brotherly love. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lack diligence; be fervent in spirit; serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; be persistent in prayer. Share with the saints in their needs; pursue hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. Be in agreement with one another. Do not be proud; instead, associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own estimation.
 - One of the hardest things to give up for those who struggle is the _____ they have found with others who are fellow strugglers.
- Christian _____
 - 2 Corinthians 5:17 - Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.
 - Galatians 2:20 - I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.
 - Identity is not found in _____ or attraction, but in Christ.

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Session 2 – Ministering to those with Sexuality & Gender Identity Struggles

Galatians 6:2 – Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.

2 Corinthians 1:3-5 – Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.

A. Understanding the Pull of _____ Sin

- **Identity:** People _____ themselves by sexuality, gender, or personal autonomy.
- **Belonging:** Many are looking for _____ and community in the wrong places.
- **Love & Security:** The culture promises _____, but it never satisfies.

B. Speaking the _____

- The Bible's definition of love runs _____ to the Western world's definition.
- According to the world, loving someone means giving them license to pursue whatever they believe will bring them _____ or fulfillment.
- The Bible says that love requires _____. Love does not mean affirming every desire they experience.
- Loving them relationally eventually must lead to us _____ the sin that is harming them and hindering their sanctification.

C. Goal of _____

- Galatians 6:1 – Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted.
- Matthew 18:15 – “If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over.”

D. Be Humble

- Colossians 3:12 – Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.
- Ephesians 4:2 – Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

E. Be _____

- Romans 15:1 – We who are powerful need to be patient with the weakness of those who don't have power and not please ourselves.
- 2 Timothy 4:2 – Preach the word. Be ready to do it whether it is convenient or inconvenient. Correct, confront, and encourage with patience and instruction.
- Be sure to maintain _____ as long as you can. You may be the only source of truth in their life.

F. Acknowledge Their Pain

- 1 Peter 3:8 – To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit;
- Ephesians 4:32 – Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

G. Let the Bible Be the _____

- Isaiah 40:8 – The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.
- 1 Thessalonians 2:13 – For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.
- 2 Corinthians 3:5 – Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God,

H. Get _____

- You can't be afraid to talk about _____ issues with them.
- Know enough about the topic to talk _____ about what they are going through.

I. Be _____ - _____

- 2 Peter 3:18 - But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity.
- Luke 2:52 - And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and with people.
- The goal is to continue a conversation not just start a conversation.

I. Take the _____

- Galatians 6:1 – 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.
- 1 Timothy 5:20 – As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear.
- Luke 17:3 – Pay attention to yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him,

J. Don't _____

- Philippians 4:6-7 - Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses every thought, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
- Hebrews 13:6 – So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?”
- 1 John 4:18 – There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.

★ Gender Identity and sexual attraction are two aspects of an individual's life.

★ We desire for all men and women to find their identity in Christ first and foremost.

★ Every aspect of identity is subjected to the person and work of Christ.