

Women Caring for Women: Same-Sex Attraction

CBC Sunday School

February 22, 2026

Discussion question: The word 'homophobia' gets used in a lot of ways. Without labeling ourselves, can we talk honestly about whether fear, disgust, or distancing shaped how we were taught to think about this issue?

A Foundational Note Before We Begin

For the purpose of this class, we will begin with two shared assumptions:

First, we are operating from the conviction that Scripture teaches that sexual intimacy is designed by God for marriage between a man and a woman. Therefore, sexual activity between two people of the same sex falls outside of God's good design. Acting on those desires would be sin, just as any sexual activity outside of biblical marriage would be sin.

Second, the "friend" we are discussing is not someone who is dismissive of God or indifferent toward holiness. She is struggling. She desires to honor Christ. She is not brazenly pursuing rebellion; she is wrestling with unwanted desires and seeking to be faithful.

Born this way?

In a way, yes.

1. Because of Adam, all of us were born with a body, heart, mind and sexuality "broken" by sin.
 - a. We were created to worship God (yes, even with our sexuality) and to find our deepest joy in him, but sin distorts what God created us for.
 - i. 7% of men are attracted to other men (only 1% are exclusively attracted to other men)
 - ii. 14% of women are attracted to other women (only 2-3% are exclusively attracted to other women)
 - b. *"Sin is not superficial to us, a mere flesh wound. It is a deep distortion, a twisted hostility toward God and his reign over us."* Sinclair Ferguson
 - c. *"Same-sex sexual intimacy is an especially clear illustration of the idolatrous human impulse to turn away from God's order and design... Homosexual practice is an example on a horizontal plane of our vertical rebellion against God."* Kevin DeYoung

But also, we don't know.

1. Our culture wrestles with questions about why people experience same-sex attraction.
 - a. Are people born this way? Is it chosen? Is it the result of trauma? Is it nature or nurture?
 - b. They don't begin with God's design for humanity so they are searching for explanations that make sense of human brokenness apart from Scripture.
2. Yes, there are sometimes patterns, but not predictors
 - a. We often see things like abuse, childhood pain, relational wounds, or complicated family dynamics in the background of a same-sex attracted woman.
 - b. Her relationship to her father will play a big role in her development, her understanding of gender, sexuality, relationships.
 - c. The patterns are not formulas. Correlation not causation.

- i. They cannot predict outcomes, and they do not explain every story. We simply do not know all the specific reasons why same-sex attraction emerges in one person's life and not another's.

Maybe it doesn't matter.

1. For a Christian the question is not ***why this particular struggle exists***, but ***what it means to live faithfully in a fallen world***.
 - a. Uncovering the "reasons" might be helpful insofar as they increase compassion, help to work through trauma, etc. But that won't ultimately solve anything.
 - b. No matter the temptation, sexual brokenness or warped identity, Jesus came to make things right again. This doesn't mean He will remove the temptation for same-sex attraction for all who come to Him in faith. It does mean that when a woman is made new in Christ and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, she is divinely empowered to deny her urges, resist her temptations and offer her sexuality to God in worship.
 - i. In Christ she will experience *"the same temptation but with someone else's power."* Jackie Hill Perry

We're in this together.

2. All of us share more in common with someone who experiences same-sex attraction than we perhaps realize.
 - a. Every person knows what it is like to wrestle with desires, urges, and longings that pull us away from God.
 - b. We are all broken by sin. We are all sexually broken by sin.
 - c. We all face the temptation to define ourselves apart from God, to make our own rules, and to build identities rooted in something other than Him.
3. Jesus' mission was not to make gay women straight. He came to show her how good God is, so her affections can be made new and she can want Him more than she wants the sin that leads to death.
 - a. He is after her affections just as much as her obedience.
 - b. *"For the unbeliever that is SSA, God is not mainly calling them to be straight; He's calling them to Himself. To know Christ, love Christ, serve Christ, honor Christ, and exalt Christ, forever. When He is the aim of their repentance and the object of their faith, they are made right with God the Father and given the power by the Holy Spirit to deny all sins – sexual and otherwise."* Jackie Hill Perry

The same-sex attracted woman is not an outsider looking in, but a fellow struggler who needs the same grace as the rest of us.

What is lost?

When a woman experiences same-sex attraction and seeks to follow Christ faithfully, there are real losses involved. If we are going to minister well, we need to understand those losses.

1. Identity as God defines it

- a. Our culture insists that our sexual desires define who we are. *"Are you gay or straight?"* The assumption is that sexuality is the core of personhood.
- b. Scripture says that our identity is being created in God's image and, for the believer, being united to Christ.

- c. Any self-definition that does not align with God's definition of us ultimately leads to misery. We've seen this in many forms — addiction, eating disorders, living defined by past abuse.
- d. A woman who believes her truest identity is her sexuality will misunderstand her purpose, her reason for being alive, and — most tragically — the depth of God's love for her.

2. Compassion and belonging

- a. Many women experiencing same-sex attraction carry their struggle quietly.
- b. She may self-isolate out of fear — fear of disgust, fear of rejection, fear of being reduced to a stereotype. Dismissive jokes, culture-war rhetoric, or harsh tones in Christian spaces can reinforce that fear.
- c. *"Imagine if your biggest life struggle was only mentioned at church as part of a joke, an insult, or to illustrate a culture war. What if the sentence, 'If you need prayer for [blank], we're here for you,' never included your struggle? Now imagine your struggle was rooted in a desire for companionship and belonging. That is the experience of many of our friends who grew up in church while experiencing unwanted same-sex attraction."* Brad Hambrick
- d. For some, "homophobia" in the church has been a reality. They may have seen expressions of disgust or heard same-sex attracted people spoken of as if they were a separate category of sinner.
- e. If she has never seen her struggle treated with compassion and dignity, she may assume there is no safe place for honesty.

3. Intimacy

- a. Sexual Intimacy
 - i. If God does not provide a desire for, or the opportunity for, a biblical heterosexual marriage, then the only faithful path is singleness and celibacy. **That is not a small calling.** It represents a real surrender of sexual expression.
 - ii. We must not minimize that cost. Faithful obedience in this area is sacrificial.
- b. Relational Intimacy
 - i. **The longing underneath same-sex attraction is often not merely sexual or romantic.** It is a desire for closeness, belonging, affirmation, and companionship.
 - ii. The church sometimes unintentionally makes things harder
 - 1. We can idolize marriage as the pinnacle of Christian maturity.
 - 2. We can treat singleness as a waiting room rather than a vocation.
 - 3. We often lack a rich theology and practice of deep friendship.
 - iii. A single woman may feel invisible in marriage-centered church culture.
 - iv. She may also hesitate to pursue close same-sex friendships for fear that inappropriate desires might arise.
 - v. This can lead to a kind of self-imposed relational starvation.
 - 1. But isolation rarely lessens temptation. If same-sex attraction is intertwined with a longing for deep connection, then withdrawing from meaningful, honest friendships may intensify the craving for sinful forms of intimacy rather than reduce it.

Discussion question: What is the difference between acknowledging temptation and building identity around temptation?

Where is God in the pain?

1. Jesus knows self-denial
 - a. Jesus denied every human impulse for self-preservation, ease and comfort by allowing himself to be crucified. He denied himself intimacy with the Father by “being made sin for us.” (2 Cor 5:21). In that moment of His deepest self-denial he cried out “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” He entered into the real anguish of self-denial.
 - b. When we speak about denying ourselves, we are not talking about something Jesus asks of us that he himself avoided. He walked that road first.
2. Jesus invites us to take up our cross
 - a. Jesus calls his followers to take up their cross and follow him. For some believers, that cross includes surrendering sexual expression. For others, it may involve different longings, ambitions, or relationships.
 - i. *“We need to recognize the cost of discipleship for everyone. For many in our churches, the cost of discipleship for LGBT-background people looks cruel and unusual. I suspect in most cases that’s because we’re not counting the cost of discipleship in other areas of life. Jesus says all of us have to say a profound ‘no’ to some of our deepest longings and intuitions. That is discipleship. Jesus says it upfront; he doesn’t bury it in the small print. . . . The wonderful paradox of the Christian faith is that as we deny self we become our real selves.”* Sam Alberry
 - b. Obedience can feel like loss; like Jesus is taking life away. But the reverse is actually happening.
3. We always receive more than we lose
 - a. *“Then Peter spoke up, ‘We have left everything to follow you!’ ‘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 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. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.’”* (Mark 1:28-31)
 - b. Jesus does not minimize what is left behind. He acknowledges the loss. But He promises that no sacrifice made for Him is wasted.
 - c. We always receive more from Jesus than we lose by following Him.

Discussion question: Why is it important not to minimize the cost of obedience?

What does healing look like?

1. **Understanding that you are more than your sexuality.**
 - a. Humans are more than who they are sexually attracted to. Your sexuality is not your identity.
 - b. Your identity is an image bearer of the living God. He made you with care and purpose to reflect His glory and goodness to the whole world.
 - c. For the believer, your identity is joined with Christ. Your image bearing – once warped by sin – has been redeemed and you now have the power of the Holy Spirit to live a life that accurately shows the world what God is like. You can resist sin. You are not defined by your sin. You are defined by what Jesus did to your sin -- He conquered it and took away its ultimate power.

2. Finding intimacy in the right places.

- a. Intimacy with Jesus
 - i. Jesus calls His disciples friends. He sacrificially served them. He laid down His life for them. He forgave them. He invited them to stay awake and pray with Him in His suffering.
 - 1. He is not distant from our need for companionship — He understands it.
 - ii. Communion with Christ is not abstract theology. It is relational. It is daily dependence. It is bringing your desires, grief, and loneliness honestly before Him.
- b. Intimacy with friends
 - i. Jesus did not design His people to exist in isolation. He formed a community. He commands us to:
 - 1. Bear one another's burdens. (Not isolate)
 - 2. Confess our sins to one another. (Not project a good self-image)
 - 3. Speak truth in love. (Not "people please")
 - 4. Serve others. (Not self-protect and self-serve)
 - ii. We desperately need to recover a biblically rich vision of friendship. Our individualistic, over-sexualized culture has flattened friendship into something casual and optional.
 - iii. *"Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends."* (John 15:13)
 - iv. *"The more isolated and lonely a woman feels, the more she will try to assuage her needs in different ways, including through sex. Having strong, intimate community with other women where deep emotional needs are met can help temper sexual temptation."* Karen Keen, *Shepherding Women in Pain*
 - 1. Many struggles are intensified by isolation. People numb pain through alcohol, food, pornography, or illicit sex — not simply because of desire, but because of loneliness.

3. Putting marriage and singleness into perspective.

- a. Marriage is not the pinnacle of the Christian faith
- b. Singleness is not a curse.
 - i. We will all be single in the new creation.
 - 1. *"By forgoing marriage now, singleness is a way of both anticipating this reality and testifying to its goodness. It's a way of saying this future reality is so certain that we can live according to it now. If marriage shows us the shape of the gospel, singleness shows us its sufficiency. It's a way of declaring to a world obsessed with sexual and romantic intimacy that these things are not ultimate, and that in Christ we possess what is."* Sam Alberry

Discussion question: In what ways might church culture unintentionally make singleness harder?

What can comforters do?

- 1. **Examine your own heart** — are you a "safe" place for her to be honest?
 - a. Do you view homosexuality as a "special" category of sin?
 - b. Do you subconsciously treat same-sex attraction as more shocking than other forms of sexual brokenness?

- i. A woman who experiences same-sex attraction is sexually broken in the same way a woman who struggles with opposite-sex lust is sexually broken. Both are wrestling with desires shaped by the fall. Both need the same gospel.
- c. Jesus did not come merely to redirect our desires — he came to rescue idolaters. He came to show us that he is more beautiful than the sin that allures us and more satisfying than what we crave.
- d. The sin that ultimately keeps anyone from God is not a particular pattern of temptation — it is unbelief.

2. Don't preach a "Heterosexual Gospel"

- a. This false gospel says: "Come to Jesus so He can make you straight." That is not the gospel.
- b. The gospel is not heterosexuality. The gospel is reconciliation with God through Christ.
 - i. *"What can be implied from those who preach the heterosexual gospel is that our sexuality is all that God cares about."* Jackie Hill Perry
- c. Many God-glorifying, Jesus-following, Scripture-obeying Christians continue to struggle with same-sex attraction. But their temptations do not rule them — King Jesus does. Their temptations do not define them — Jesus does.

3. Dignify her personhood

- a. Even when you don't know who around you may be struggling — speak in ways that assume she is present.
 - i. Stop the jokes. Stop the slurs. Stop the sweeping generalizations.
 - ii. She is a person. She loves her children. She tends her garden. She walks her dog. She enjoys sunsets.
 - iii. She is in our churches, our families, our Bible studies, and our communities.
 - iv. She is listening.
 - 1. When same-sex attraction is only referenced in punchlines, political commentary, or culture-war rhetoric, it communicates that she does not belong.

4. Draw her into community

- a. Help her feel part of the "tribe of women"
 - i. She may feel like an "outsider."
 - ii. She may struggle with gender nonconformity if she does not fit gender stereotypes.
 - iii. Do not assume she is attracted to you. That subtle suspicion communicates distrust and distance rather than friendship.
 - 1. *"Some mistakenly believe that homosexuality is the result of an overactive sex drive."* Karen Keen, *Shepherding Women in Pain*
- b. Expose her to healthy marriages and families
 - i. She may have had negative experiences with males (abuse, abandonment)
 - ii. She needs to be around fathers and brothers who can honor her and validate her as a woman.

5. Validate the cost of obedience

- a. If she is choosing faithfulness to Christ, she is walking a costly road.
 - i. Do not pretend obedience is easy.
 - ii. Do not rush her past grief.
 - iii. Do not minimize the sacrifice.
- b. Jesus acknowledged loss when he called people to follow him. We should too.

6. Be Proactive Parents

- a. Teach a Biblical vision of sexuality

- i. Teach them about gender, sexuality and sin. They need to hear it from YOU. Don't assume they know why you believe what you believe. Teach it to them from Scripture, not sentiment or tradition.
- b. Refuse to idolize marriage
 - i. Christian culture can unintentionally communicate: "Marriage and children are the pinnacle of maturity."
 - ii. Instead, we should be able to say: *"I will be just as proud of you if you remain single and live obediently to Jesus as if you marry and have fifteen children and live obediently to Jesus."* Rebecca McLaughlin
 - iii. Obedience is the goal — not a particular life path. *"If marriage ever came or singleness called me by name, He wanted to guarantee by the work of His hands that both would be lived unto Him."* Jackie Hill Perry
- c. Teach that feelings are not commands
 - i. "You may feel something strongly — but you do not have to act on it."
 - 1. You feel angry, but you do not have to sin in your anger.
 - 2. You feel afraid, but you do not have to run.
 - 3. You feel desire, but you do not have to obey it.
- d. Model self-denial as normal Christianity
 - i. If we structure our children's lives around constant comfort, we unintentionally train them to expect discipleship without cost.
 - ii. Following Jesus has always required self-denial. **If our goal as parents is simply to keep our children happy, comfortable, and entertained, we may actually be weakening their spiritual resilience.**
 - iii. It is good discipleship to teach our kids that they will not always get what they want.
 - 1. Choosing to give someone else the bigger piece of candy.
 - 2. Letting a sibling talk first.
 - 3. Doing chores even if they're tired or bored.
 - 4. Running errands with mom without complaining.
 - 5. Missing the "perfect" (perhaps kid-centered) family weekend because mom and dad are serving someone in need.
 - iv. These small, ordinary moments are not insignificant. They are training grounds. **When we gently but consistently teach our children to say no to themselves, we are preparing them for a lifetime of saying yes to Jesus — even when obedience is inconvenient, uncomfortable, or costly.**

Recommended Resources:

-*Gay Girl, Good God: The Story of Who I Was and Who God Has Always Been* by Jackie Hill Perry
 -*What does the Bible Say About Homosexuality* by Kevin DeYoung
 -Video: *Does God Still Love Me If I'm Gay?* by Sam Alberry
<https://youtu.be/ZEBWCapAaqM?si=Q72EfEtwS5eUbPp4>

For Parents:

-The Holy Sexuality Project www.holysexuality.com
 -*God's Go Togethers: A Celebration of God's Design for People* by Sam Alberry
 -*God's Signpost: How Marriage Points Us to God's Love* by Sam Alberry
 -*God Made Boys and Girls: Helping Children Understand the Gift of Gender* by Marty Machowski