

Ten Arguments for SOGI Laws Refuted from the Bible

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There is a way that seems right to a man,
but its end is death.
– Proverbs 14:12 –

In the book of James, the Lord's brother tells us that if we need wisdom, we are to ask God and he will grant it liberally (1:5). Just like Solomon, God's children are promised ample wisdom as they are being prepared to inherit the kingdom of God (2:5). In truth, with the rise of sexual orientation and gender identity confusion in our day, the church needs wisdom. We need wisdom to know what to believe and wisdom to know what to say and do in the broader culture.

In what follows, I will let Scripture speak to a number of false accusations against Christians with regards to SOGI laws—language being added to non-discrimination policies in the public and private sectors. Our goal is to wisely understand the times and know the right thing to do, just like the men of Issachar (1 Chronicles 12:32). These considerations are written from a Christian perspective and are for those who take the Bible seriously—Christian or otherwise.

In what follows, I will answer ten false lines of argument that are often used to defend the need for legislating protections for LGBT community. Here is the list. They will be considered in conversation with the Bible below.

Ten False Premises to Be Refuted Below

1. The Bible does not condemn homosexuality or deny transgenderism.
2. The Church hates the LGBT community.
3. Unless you affirm my sexual orientation and/or gender identity, you hurt or hate me.
4. When you deny my sexual orientation and/or gender identity, you deny my personhood.
5. We learn best about sexual orientation and gender identity from our children.
6. When immaterial feelings conflict with material bodies, material bodies must be conformed to the internal desires.
7. Self-denial is hurtful and will result in personal harm.
8. We must protect equal rights for all people in all things.
9. Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity are the next step in the Civil Rights movement. (D. J. Jordan)
10. Christians are against those who identify as LGBT having civil rights.

Ten False Premises Refuted

FALSE PREMISE #1: The Bible does not condemn homosexuality or deny transgenderism.

The first thing we must say is that Scripture does not have to have a single proof text to affirm or deny a doctrine. The Trinity, arguably the most important Christian doctrine, does not appear in the Old Testament and cannot be explained by one single verse. It is a composite doctrine which stands on manifold evidence from the Bible. The same is true for a biblical view sexuality.

There is no single verse that explains everything about sex, gender, and marriage. Instead, we have a biblical storyline that begins in (1) creation, travels through (2) the fall of mankind into sin, only to find hope in the (3) redemption of God. This redemptive history leads to Jesus Christ, his death and resurrection. From there the story continues to (4) the church and the (5) culmination of all things—a future we are looking forward to with hope and prayer. In short, this five-fold narrative (Creation, Fall, Redemption, New Creation—in the church and the age to come) sets the stage for everything in the Bible. Set in the midst of the Bible we find the pinnacle of wisdom, grace, and truth—the person and work of Jesus Christ. He is what the Bible is about (John 5:39) and thus he is the main point in any discussion about sex.

In this whole Bible context, we find verses affirming God's design for sex and sexuality. We find explanations for those who find within themselves desires that do not match God's design. And we find a hope and help in Jesus Christ for every sinner whose heart pulls them away from God and towards self-made identities and desires that Scripture forbids.

To say it differently, wisdom is not found outside of God's Word (Jesus) or God's words (the Bible). Rather, as Colossians 2:3 says, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are found in him. And thus, because Jesus came to fulfill the law (Matthew 5:17–20) and answered his opponents by quoting the Old Testament, we do throw out the words of Moses in Genesis or Leviticus. Rather, believing Jesus, as God the Son Incarnate, is right about sex and marriage *because he is the Creator of sex and marriage*, we listen to him. And as he quotes Genesis 1:27 and 2:24 (in Matthew 19:4, 12), we discover he learn he affirms God's original design for marriage and sexuality.

1. Mankind is made male and female.
2. Marriage is for one man and woman.
3. Sex is a gift for men and women bound together in covenant marriage.

Likewise, because Jesus does not overturn the Old Testament, the Bible teaches us

4. Any deviation from God's design is errant and invites the judgment of God.

5. Fornication, adultery, divorce, pornography, homosexuality, and expressions of transgender are, therefore, not in accordance with God's design, and can never lead to human flourishing.

How do we know?

The Old Testament, which Jesus wholly affirmed, says so explicitly and the New Testament confirms this pattern. For instance, outlawing a bevy of sexual deviations, Leviticus 18 calls homosexuality an abomination before God (v. 22; cf. Leviticus 20:13). Likewise, Deuteronomy 22:5 says, "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." Written in the negative, these prohibitions reinforce God's original blessed design. Throughout the history of Israel, the normative pattern which received the blessing of God—i.e., children and familial love (see Psalm 127–128)—was male and female sexuality in covenant marriage.

The New Testament pattern confirms the Old Testament Law. While Jesus could have abrogated the Law, he does not. When asked about marriage and divorce (Matthew 19), he points back to creation. He admits that even Moses permission concerning divorce does not match the Lord's original design. Indeed, just as the world was created with wisdom (Proverbs 8), so we find in creation wisdom's echo—sexuality that follows God's original order. When his pattern is followed, blessings of life are enjoyed; when it is ignored or denied, devastation follows. Indeed, Romans 1 speaks of homosexuality as an example of God's permissive judgment—handing sinners over to their desires. Likewise, 1 Corinthians 6:9–11 and 1 Timothy 1:8–11 list homosexuality *along with a number of other sexual sins* as lifestyles to flee.

If the word of God has any bearing on your life, it is impossible not to read these passages as reiterating the large-scale design of God to unite men and women in marriage through the beautiful gift of sexual union. In fact, because sexual union displays the spiritual relationship between Christ and his church (Ephesians 5:32–33), God takes it very seriously. What was designed in Genesis (a marriage between Adam and Eve) foreshadows Christ's marriage with this bride (Revelations 19:6–9). And so, a binary, male-female marriage begins and ends the Bible and supplies us with a clear picture of God's good design in the world. In between Genesis and Revelation, people in God's image may forsake God's wise design, but not without consequence.

This is what we must say to those in the church and out. With love and sorrow in our hearts, "There is a way that seems right to a man . . . a woman . . . or [however you fill in the blank], but in the end leads to death." Sincerity of desire cannot overturn God's design any more than a woman who jumps off a building can will herself to fall upwards. In a fallen world, it is not surprising people have disordered desires and minds incongruous with their bodies. In fact, the LGBT community confirms a vital truth that Christians have often suppressed—namely, that all of us—regardless of orientation or identity—defy the design of God.

No one is perfectly righteous. And no one is without sexual sin. Unfortunately, Christians have not spoken of this enough. Too much attention has been given to willful disobedience; not enough attention has been given to the innate desires which conflict with God's holy design. In theology, this is called the noetic effect of the fall. We might add to this, a "somatic" effect of the fall. There is in every person a bodily resistance to the will of God. And hence 1 Thessalonians says that it is God's will that everyone learn to control his body in a way that the Lord (4:3–8).

Accordingly, the Bible does condemn homosexuality and deny transgenderism, just as it condemns adultery, fornication, pornography, and every other form of sexual immorality (*porneia*). Therefore, if the Bible has any bearing on your life, it must inform the way understand marriage and sexuality, and the way you treat those who disagree with the Bible you hold.

FALSE PREMISE #2: The Church hates the LGBT community.

Too often Christians, or those who take the name of Christ, have pointed the finger at homosexuals and the trans community, ripped a quote from Leviticus or Deuteronomy, and sentenced a fellow image-bearer to eternity in hell. Sadly, this misrepresents the gospel and the God who sent Jesus Christ to die for sinners.

It is a fact that the Bible sentences sinners to eternal judgment, but this sentence hangs over the head of all people—not just those types of sinners who society deems less acceptable. Unfortunately, the church over the last few decades has often been more like the culture than Christ. Imitating the shrill cries of talk radio, some have spoken ungraciously without listening and loving those to whom they speak. Thus, Christians must examine themselves and ask if they who have received grace have demonstrated grace and compassion to the LGBT community. If not, we need to repent, admit our errors, and learn afresh how to love others, as God loved us when our sin separated us from him.

In this way, churches must learn to speak in two ways. First, we must speak with humility and slowness to those who are purported to be our enemies. Against the labels of bigot and hater, we must befriend family, friends, and neighbors who identify themselves with the LGBT community. As James 1 says, we must be slow to speak and slow become angry. We must listen and learn, and ask, as Andrew Wilson puts, "What's it like to be you? Tell me about you." Churches have not, on the whole, modeled this kind of relational love well. Thankfully, this is changing.

In his book *Love into Light*, Peter Hubbard tells of how his church has loved and served members of the LGBT community near them. Likewise, Rosaria Butterfield, formerly a queer studies professor at Syracuse University who now identifies herself with Christ, has spoken of the way Christians must pursue relationships with the LGBT community. Simultaneously, Christians should be some of the first to defend LGBT from bullying, physical and verbal abuse, and the vicious non-Christian attacks of institutions like Westboro Baptist Church.

(I say “institution” because WBC is neither “Baptist” nor a “church.” They are Satanic mouthpiece for hate masquerading as a church. And thus, Christians must speak out against them. And against individuals like them who spew vitriol against people made in god’s image.)

That being said, Christian love stands on truth and cannot affirm beliefs or lifestyles which Scripture says leads to devastation and death. With compassion and humility in our hearts, we must go back to Scripture to learn how to speak of sin, salvation, and sexual purity.

First, we can learn that the Bible is more inclusive in its language than most of us are. Instead of cherry-picking sins, it addresses everyone as a sinner and teaches us that our covetousness is idolatry (Colossians 3:5), and that everyone is fundamentally an idolater (Romans 1:18–32) and no one is sexually pure *in heart* (Matthew 5:27–30). Thus wisdom does not begin in simply quoting a single verse which condemn others; it begins by taking the log out of our own eye (Matthew 7:1–5), letting judgment begin with the house of God (1 Peter 4:17), and then bringing a full-orbed gospel—one that centers on the work of Christ.

Second, we learn afresh what the gospel is and that before it demands repentance, it grants new life and power to change. Too many Christians have wrongly elevated the volitional choice of the LGBT members and told them, “Stop it,” “Change,” “Choose your way to a better life.” These commands are not meant to be unloving, but consider if you were on the receiving end of them? Such a command denies the gospel and the need for the new birth. No one is helped (or saved) by commands to “choose differently.” No one is saved by way of heterosexuality, either. God’s good news is not: “Be heterosexual.” The gospel is: Christ died to pay for sins and give new life in his resurrection; trust in him; receive his love and forgiveness so you can turn from previous idols. Therefore, we must be more biblical, more gracious, and more gospel-centered in the way we speak.

In these ways and more, the church can love the LGBT community. Yes, many Christians have failed here. We need pardon for the ways we have spoken with anger and refused to care for hurting neighbors, but such failures are not indicative of Christ and those who are most like him. The church is community of love whose confidence in Christ enables us to love our neighbors and even our enemies. Indeed, the church does not and must not hate the LGBT community; we can and must love them by listening to them, leaning into them, and learning their struggles. Only in this context can we speak the truth of Jesus’ message of repentance and salvation (see Matthew 4:17; John 3:3–8).

Thus, the church of Jesus Christ *does not* hate its LGBT neighbor. Rather, we love them. But such love is not uncoupled from our commitment to Christ and his design for human flourishing.

FALSE PREMISE #3: Unless you affirm my sexual orientation and/or gender identity, you hurt or hate me.

When Paul wrote to the 2 Corinthians 7:8–9 he observed how his previous infliction of emotional pain caused him pain, but also produced repentance:

For even if I made you grieve with my letter, I do not regret it—though I did regret it, for I see that that letter grieved you, though only for a while. As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us.

Paul did not take lightly the impact of his words. He was aware that his instructions stung his beloved friends in Corinth. For the pain he caused, he felt pain. Yet, he would not rescind his comments as they produced a needed change in the Corinthian church.

How many of us, too, can think of times when parents, teachers, or coaches corrected us. In the immediate, the rebuke was painful, maybe even shameful. But in time, it produced a change for the better. Sadly, many people today don't know that kind of healing correction. They believe any opposition is unloving or worse—hateful. Because no one has ever confronted them or because they take personal offense every time someone questions their beliefs or actions, they miss out on all the benefits that come through instruction, rebuke, correction, and training in righteousness. Indeed, because they trust themselves instead of an external (read: older, wiser authority), they remain ensnared to their folly.

Such is the new normal for moral discussions. And the debate about sexual morality is only one branch on this greater vine of non-confrontation. What has been lost is an open market for ideas which lead to greater understanding and conviction for all involved. Tackling this issue, Gabe Lyons and David Kinnaman make the point this way:

Our public square is rapidly devolving into a place where sharing opinions, especially those that make another person uncomfortable, is off limits. “See something, say something” might work for Homeland Security, but don't try it with a friend. The new social mantra is “See something, keep your trap shut.”

But avoiding the risk of offending someone or hurting another person's feelings keeps conversations sterile and impoverished. Don't get us wrong; sensitivity to others is a good and godly thing. But when risk avoidance prevents honest dialogue or a robust discussion of difficult topics, it's time for everyone to do some growing up. (*Good Faith*, 108)

Such juvenalization fits with the times and can be seen in the collegiate safe spaces which prevent any kind of meaningful disagreement or counter-point discussions. Universities, which were once bastions for learning and dialogue, are now some of the most intolerant places on the planet—intolerant of anyone who believes in a binding, authoritative norm.

The fruit of such intolerance is that students struggle to state the obvious. Consider the video from The Family Policy Institute of Washington, which quizzed students at the University of Washington about matters of self-identification. When a 5' 10" white male identified himself as a 6'5" Chinese woman, [the students were unable \(or unwilling\) to tell him he was wrong](#)—when clearly *he was wrong*.

The therapeutic nature of abuse has added to the confusion. Whereas African Americans in the Jim Crow south faced horrific physical violence and life-shattering legal opposition, many LGBT have only faced emotional and social pressures. This does not turn a blind eye to the physical bullying that does (continue to) take place. But it is to say that many who come out of the closet are following—in 2017—the path of least resistance. Celebration awaited athletes Michael Sam and Jason Collins as they identified themselves as gay. Magazine covers and a reality show were the laurels earned by Bruce Jenner when he identified himself as Katelyn. By contrast, to hold to traditional values or a biblical view of binary genders is to reap the modern whirlwind.

In this context, we must repeat: it is not an act of hatred to disagree with someone. The Proverbs speak of how the faithful wounds of friend can be trusted (Proverbs 27:6). While many have spoken harshly without love, the Bible gives a beautiful category of love-driven rebuke. Such a rebuke is praised by the prudent (Psalm 141:5; Proverbs 27:7) and sought out by the wise (Proverbs 13:1; cf. Ecclesiastes 7:5). Moreover, this is how God displays his love: he disciplines those whom he loves, which means he corrects and rebukes his children (see Hebrews 12). Thus, while the world conceives of love as only and always affirming, biblical love corrects, rebukes, and intervenes.

Indeed, this kind of love is displayed in demanding teachers, hard-nosed coaches, strict parents, and school boards that refuse to lower standards. Interventions for addicts and alcoholics are not unloving; as difficult as they are, they demonstrate self-sacrificial love. While our self-directed society wants easy-access affirmation, love and justice require something more costly. To disagree with someone is not to demean them, it actually draws them out to defend their position and either stand more firmly in their personal choice or abandon their view because of its error. This is not how the world defines love, but there are too many counter-examples to label it ubiquitously unloving.

FALSE PREMISE #4: When you deny my sexual orientation and/or gender identity, you deny my personhood.

A related false premise has to do with personhood and what role sexual orientation and gender identity play in forming a person's personhood.

The biblical argument is that self-worth (individually understood) and human dignity (corporately conceived) are found in one's relationship to God. To be made in the image of God is the bedrock for human worth. It is because every person is made in God's image that Christians are wrong to demean anyone. At the same time, the Bible teaches that personhood is far more than one's sexual experience.

For instance, the most satisfied and satisfying human who ever lived was a single man who died an unmarried, virgin. Jesus Christ did not take a wife and never experienced orgasm. If anything, he was a “eunuch” wholly devoted to the kingdom of God. John’s Gospel repeats that he never deviated from the will of his father, which means he could not and did not pursue sexual expression. His whole life runs contrary to the sexual progressive notion that personhood is defined by genital parts and sexual passions.

Jesus did not pity himself or rebel against his father. Rather, he had rich relationships with men and women, children and parents, rich and poor. He lived his life in constant service to others and gave out of the abundance of joy and love he received from God. In this way, he is the pinnacle counter-example to the lie that one must gratify their sexual desires or express their self-directed orientation in order to be satisfied. Jesus did not live for himself; he constantly restrained himself. And in so doing, he demonstrated what true humanity looks like. Through his death and resurrection, he offers such life to all who trust in him and follow his lead.

For instance, Sam Allberry, author of *Is God Anti-Gay?* and himself a man who has same-sex attraction has said argued that “[you are not your sexuality](#),” and reminds us that “(1) Your identity is in Christ. (2) Discipleship is hard. (3) God’s Word is good. (4) The church is vital. (5) The future is glorious.” Indeed, while some want to argue that denying one’s sexual self is to deny them, the word of God calls us to see that life is bigger than sex.

For now, the Western (or, is it worldwide?) obsession with sex will continue to fund the the notion that sexual expression (whether in orientation or identity) is humanity’s chief end. But sooner or later this lie will be exposed for what it is, a false promise of pleasure and fulfillment. Life is more than sex; and only sex that abides by God’s design will bring life not death. Those in the church help no one by permissively letting people express themselves as they choose. Rather, love compels us to tell others that you are more than your sexuality. In this way, when we object to someone’s self-designation of transgender, we are insisting on the norms of biology and God’s created order. [This is not bigotry](#), this is an affirmation that life is bigger than our self-identification, especially self-identification that is premised solely on some fleeting (and changing) self-perception of gender identity or sexual orientation.

FALSE PREMISE #5: We learn best about sexual orientation and gender identity from our children.

In times past there was an affirmation of authority and respect for older, wiser teachers. Children went to school to learn from those who preceded them in life and exceeded them in knowledge. In more recent times, perceived wisdom has resided on the side of the youth. Whether in television shows like *Home Improvement*, where bumbling Tim Taylor needed the regular correction of his children, or in political figures like [Barack Obama](#) who said his girls changed his mind about homosexuality, the point is the same: *Listen to the children; they know best.*

Is this true? Certainly, there is something refreshing about seeing a child speak or act without prejudice, but it is patently false that children know best. Children are not born with an intact moral compasses; they need instruction. Perceived innocence in children must be held together with their inability to act on many selfish or foolish desires. Moreover, Scripture's constant refrain is that the parents and elders of a community must teach their sons and daughters.

Consider: In Israel, the law was given to priests who in turn taught the people (Leviticus 10:11). The people in turn taught their children (Deuteronomy 6:1–9). Proverbs is premised on sons learning wisdom from their fathers (see 1:8; 2:1; 3:1, 11, 21; 4:1; 5:1; etc.). It is not unheard of in the Bible that the younger has more wisdom than the older (see Psalm 119:99–100), but such is always an indictment against the aged. More to the point, when the faithful parents failed to instruct their children, the next generation broke out against God and invited his wrath (Judges 2). Children, therefore, are to look up to those who lead them, to learn from and imitate their faithfulness (cf. Hebrews 13:7, 17). Parents, also, are to wisely teach children so that they do not succumb to the folly bound up in their heart (Proverbs 22:15).

That leaders in our community and in our nation attribute their views on sexual ethics coming from their children indicates a severe lack of moral clarity and conviction. Instead of building a society that teaches the next generation to respect authority and safeguard moral norms, they are teaching our children that they know better than the generation that goes before them. This may fit with our youth-obsessed culture, but it effectively undermines social order in the long run. Therefore, it is a false premise to attribute wisdom on all matters sexual to the children who know best.

FALSE PREMISE #6: When immaterial feelings conflict with material bodies, material bodies must be conformed to the internal desires.

In the ancient world there was a religious movement called Gnosticism. Although it began outside the church, with thinkers like Plato and Plotinus, its most famous expression is found in the 2nd and 3rd century church. Gnostics (which means “having knowledge”) believed the material world was corrupt and of lesser import than the spiritual and immaterial world. Therefore, they developed ways to seek a higher *gnosis*.

In our day, there is a modern Gnosticism that elevates the human psyche above the physical body: “Whatever I feel, I must do.” “I cannot fight this feeling, therefore I must give in.” “I think God made a mistake with my body, so . . .”

Gender dysphoria is the (very real) perception that one's inner person does not match their physical body. Because internal feelings trump physical, observable bodies, such an incongruence leads the person to alter their dress, mannerisms, or physical body. It is just as conceivable that the incongruence could lead a person to train their mind (something more plastic than their body) to adjust to their body, but because of the

modern Gnosticism that elevates psyche over soma, various expressions of gender identity result.

In response, we must grieve with family and friends who experience this incongruence. We can listen to their plight and seek to understand their pain. But we can also press on this underlying presupposition that drives transgenderism forward: that one must obey their perceived internal desires.

Scripture tells us that everyone of us is disordered. Romans 3 says that no one is good, no one seeks God, thus no one resembles the image of God as they should. Everyone experiences disorder between brain and body. Some experience this physically, as limbs and even genitals are not properly formed (Matthew 19:12). Others experience this internally, with same-sex attractions or gender dysphoria. The transgender solution is to bend the body and behavior to match the mind (defined cognitively, affectively, and volitionally); the Christian response is to submit the will to the body God has given you.

Indeed, this is where freedom comes. Freedom is not found in expressing wrong desires, but denying them and replacing them with greater aims and pleasures. But this too runs into a philosophical problem, another false premise.

FALSE PREMISE #7: Self-denial is hurtful and will result in personal harm.

There is an underlying belief among modern hedonists that self-denial is an absolute denial of self. Self, it is argued, must be expressed to be enjoyed. Any repression of sexual desires or gender preferences is ultimately harmful. Yet, Scripture and common experience argue the other way.

In the Bible, God teaches that our inner desires (our heart) is not to be trusted. Numbers 15:39 instructs the Israelites to mark their garments with tassels to remind them of the Lords' commandments. Why? So that they do not whore after the wicked desires of their heart. Likewise, Ezekiel 14 warns of "idols of the heart" and Jeremiah 17:9 reads, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?"

In short, the Bible paints a grim picture of the human heart. While God created mankind good, the fall of Adam and Eve corrupted every human heart (see Genesis 6:5; 8:21). Therefore, we cannot assume that because we feel deeply about something, that it is right. For this reason, Jesus calls all who follow him to deny themselves and take up their cross to follow him (Matthew 16:24–28). In context, it is difficult to discern which command is more difficult—self-denial or voluntary crucifixion. Maybe, the latter should define the former: Jesus calls all who follow him to die to their desires, and find new desires in him.

Unfortunately, many Christians have pointed the finger at the LGBT community to deny themselves without equal discussion of their own need for sexual repentance. Jesus' message to deny self is all-inclusive. He is not asking any special class of sinners to

deny self; he has every one in mind. In fact, to say it differently, the problem for any individual is not their particular sin, but their general humanity.

It is not homosexuality or heterosexuality that is the problem; it is our humanity. As a son or daughter of Adam and Eve, we are all born idolaters (Romans 1:18–32), sinners living in disobedience to God (Romans 5:12, 18–19), and objects of wrath by our human nature (Ephesians 2:1–3). Accordingly, the call for all humanity is to trust in Christ by dying with him and living anew in him. This is what self-denial means—to turn to Jesus so that by his strength we can live as he commanded.

To those who love to express themselves above all, this sounds like death; but to a those who have tasted the death fruit of life without God, the call to self-denial is a message of liberation. In this way, self-denial does not steal joy and sexual pleasure, it protects the sinner from the pain that illicit sex causes and brings them into relationship with Jesus Christ, the most satisfied and satisfying man who ever lived.

FALSE PREMISE #8: We must protect equal rights for all people in all things.

In a culture taught to protect the rights of all minorities, this argument “feels” right. And because of the Civil Rights movement which stood up to the injustices and legal inequalities in our nation (see #9), any opposition must come from biased bigots or extremists who are seeking to use moral and religious standards to reinforce prejudice.

There are two ways to answer this. First, no one is unilaterally tolerant, i.e., tolerant of every and any practice. Everyone must draw the line somewhere. Should “sexual orientation” include polygamy, polyamory, or pansexuality? Do bestiality and pedophilia get an inclusion? And if not, why not? At present there are men and women who believe they are cats, dogs, and dragons. As one transgender advocate stated, we are on a “path to a new paradigm that will allow as many bodies, sexualities and identities to exist as those living in this world might wish to have, with each one of them respected, desired, and celebrated” (cited in Mark Yarhouse, *Understanding Gender Dysphoria*, 50). Is this really where the trans movement is going? If so, it will result in the disintegration of society, and all attempts for an enriching, diverse community will be lost.

The second argument is that justice is not secured by protecting rights that do harm to others. If a policy seeking protection for one class of people violates the right of privacy for others, it cannot be maintained that such actions are just. There must be another way. Moreover, there is a natural (even theological) inconsistency between the right for different races and sexes to receive equal treatment. Every individual regardless of race, class, or color is made in the image of God; therefore, no one person, no one race better than another. Before the Civil Rights movement men were raised and lowered by race. (Sadly, this still continues in too many corridors). Thus, race-based Civil Rights found biblical-theological ground to stand on, as all men and women are made equal before God.

However, the transgender movement does not find the same moral bedrock. Scripture says God made mankind “male and female” (Genesis 1:27). The Law of Moses reiterates the original design when it forbids men taking on the dress and mannerisms of women, and vice versa (Deuteronomy 22:5). And Jesus follows suit when he quotes Genesis 1:27 and affirms God’s lawful design as one man uniting in covenant marriage to one woman (Matthew 19:4).

Accordingly, while the Civil Rights movement stood firmly on Scripture, the transgender movement stands against the justice and goodness of God’s binary creation. In current debates this difference may not matter to those in the fight, but in the long arc of history which bends towards justice, it will make a difference. Ultimately, God’s created norm will prevail. The man who was raised from the dead will decide who stands on the right side of history, and because he has spoken definitively for God’s original design for sex and marriage, we can know what his decision will be on the last day (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:9–11).

FALSE PREMISE #9: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity are the next step in the Civil Rights movement. (D. J. Jordan)

Supporters of LGBT rights often compare their struggle to the civil rights struggle of African-Americans throughout the last century. The advocacy strategy to gain acceptance for the LGBT cause changed from “love” to “civil rights” in the early 2000’s. This strategy proved to be extremely successful as the nation quickly became more accepting in the late 2000’s. In 2011, the late NAACP Chairman Julian Bond gave credibility to this argument when he came out in support of gay marriage as a civil rights issue. Despite Bond’s embrace of LGBT rights and many other liberal causes, the African-American community still has not supported the overall LGBT agenda, or gay marriage. According to a [May 2016 Pew poll](#), 58% of African-Americans still oppose gay marriage. The same poll shows that 61% of Black Protestants oppose gay marriage.

The claim that LGBT rights and African-American civil rights are the same are inaccurate for at least three reasons:

Ethnicity and sexual orientation are not the same. Ethnicity is known at birth (and even conception), however, there is no known scientific research that proves that humans are born with a LGBT sexual orientation. Also, the African-American race of a person is known publicly at all times, unlike sexual preference or orientation.

The historical struggle is not the same. African-Americans were enslaved in the United States, and did not gain freedom until 1865. LGBT Americans have never experienced anything close to slavery. In addition, Jim Crow restrictions (voting, employment, education, access to public services, etc) have never been the same for LGBT Americans. To say the civil rights history is the same is grossly inaccurate.

Civil rights objectives of each community have not been the same. African-Americans have sought freedom and equal treatment under the law for basic freedoms, like voting, housing and education. The LGBT objective has been focused on social acceptance of their lifestyle, not basic freedoms.

Comparing the civil rights of LGBT Americans and African-Americans is like comparing apples and oranges. They are not the same, and any debate that claims this ignores the facts and lacks credibility.

FALSE PREMISE #10: Christians are against those who identify as LGBT having civil rights.

Christians believe that all human beings are made in the image of God. Therefore, every person has inherent dignity and is deserving of his or her God-given civil rights. Consequently, we support full civil rights for all people, including those who identify as LGBT. A person's rights are afforded to them by God, not based upon any government or human action. Consequently, people who identify as LGBT should not be afforded *special* benefits because they identify with certain sinful behaviors. They should be treated with equal dignity because they are made in God's image.

This is the ultimate reason why we speak up for truth. It is not to prevent someone from finding joy and freedom. Rather, it because joy is preserved by liberty and liberty is preserved by truth. As Jesus said in John 8, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (vv. 32–33). Only when we walk in truth is freedom preserved and promoted. Conversely, any liberty based upon falsehood or at odds with the Creator cannot be something Christians, constrained by the Word of God, accept or affirm. Despite what others might say, it is love, not bigotry that moves us to affirm maleness and femaleness as good gifts of God's creation.

As the founders of our nation understood, we do not create rights, we receive them. And thus we do not deny our neighbors from having civil rights. We simply call to attention the fact that "civil rights" that oppose God's design are not liberties that can sustain human flourishing or healthy and diverse community. They are false hopes, which may portend life but in the end cannot deliver on what they promise.

Conclusion

Where does this leave us? In a word: conflicted, but not confused. To be faithful to the totality of Scripture the Christian must pursue love and truth, compassion and conviction, justice and mercy. Any approach that let's go of either pole will ultimately prove unfaithful and dangerous to individuals and society at large. By contrast, those who speak truth in love are able to speak compassionately to those wrestling with their sexuality, while protecting them from the false philosophies that ultimately damage human flourishing.

In these ten arguments, it has been my aim to show that opposing the liberal agenda of sexual progressives is not just *not* unloving, it is actually the most loving thing one can do. From the Bible and the way church ought to treat the LGBT church to the nature of love, self-denial, and civil rights, we have argued that policies advocating protection of sexual orientation and gender identity actually do harm. While immediate gains may be made by making these groups “protected classes,” the larger effect is to cement individuals in lifestyles which deviate from God’s design.

While the world may deny God’s design, those in the church must not. To deny or diminish his designs for sex and sexuality is to let the flames of passion burn up everything in their path. Accordingly, it is my hope that you will see that to stand against SOGI laws is not ultimately to stand against the people who fall into the group. It is to stand up for them and for civil society as a whole.