

Baggage Claim Part 4 Human Sexuality and the Bible

Message to Conversation Guide

1. Read over and discuss the list of sexual dysfunctions that were displayed in the Old Testament man's sin in the garden of Eden.

- *Incest* (Lot and his daughters **Ge. 19:36**)
- *Rape* (Amnon, Tamar **2 Sam. 13**)
- *Adultery* (David and Bathsheba **2 Samuel 11**)
- *Men sleeping with prostitutes.* **Ezekiel 23:44**
- *Father-in law sleeping with daughter-in law,* (Judah and Tamar: **Genesis 38:1-15**)

2. Discuss this principle: **“Homosexuality is not the sin but a sin.”**

3. Read and discuss verses that explicitly talk about same sex relationships.

1 Cor. 6:9-11

9 Or do you not know that wrongdoers **will not inherit the kingdom of God?** Do not be deceived: **Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men** 10 nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 **And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified,** you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. NIV

4. Discuss the quote below that discusses illicit sexual desires need to be resisted by everybody.

“Within a Christian framework, opposite-sex marriage is set apart as the only place for sexual intimacy. This boundary cuts off the possibility of sex with anyone else. It is highly restrictive and, in some respects, against our inclinations: few married people never have the desire for sexual intimacy with someone other than their spouse. Thus, every Christian is called at times to sacrifice his or her desires.” Rebecca McLaughlin

5. Read Rebecca and Rachel's story below and discuss.

Rachel and I are that fizzy mix of alike and opposite that makes for a great relationship. I'm an extrovert; she's an introvert. I'm an optimist; she's a pessimist. I'm impulsive; she's risk-averse. I'm from London; she's from California. I grew up in a fiercely academic, church-going family. She is a self-made scholar, raised religion-free. We both studied arts subjects at swanky universities. We both love books and poetry and debating fresh ideas. We are both passionate Christians with seminary degrees, trying to grapple with the Bible in the original languages and apply it to our complicated lives. We make

each other laugh, we push each other to do better, and we are both primarily attracted to women. Our stories of same-sex attraction are as different as our stories of faith. Mine is the story of a girl who found herself from childhood falling in love with older, inaccessible girls, but hoped and prayed she would grow out of it—a dream that finally died in grad school. It’s a story of silence and quiet loss, as my heart got stuck to people who could not want me back. It’s a story of never touching another woman in a sexual way, but always longing for more intimacy—sometimes more than I knew I could have. And, like many Christians of my generation who felt more drawn to those of their own sex, it’s a story of carrying the burdens of legitimate needs and complex desires, and a cavernous fear that disclosing my feelings would ruin my friendships. Rachel’s story is the opposite. It’s a story of growing up without a Christian framework and realizing at fifteen that she was drawn to a beautiful senior girl. It’s a story of pursuing and seducing that girl and establishing an intimate, ongoing, open relationship. It’s a story of sleeping with many other supposedly straight women—even developing a conquest mentality—and of despising Christians for being stupid and easily lured into bed. But then it’s a story of reading her way into Yale, being left by her high school girlfriend, plunging into existential angst, stealing a book called *Mere Christianity* from a lapsed-Catholic friend, and being overpowered by the gospel of Jesus. It’s a story of trying to reconcile her lifestyle with the Bible and failing; of committing to Jesus above sex with women and failing; and then gradually growing in obedience and ability to resist temptation. It’s a story of dependence on Jesus’s love and trusting that his no to sexual relationships with women meant a better yes to a deeper relationship with him. 1 Rachel and I are both now married to men—men we love and respect and depend on. Our marriages are good and true, and tempered by all the usual ups and downs that arise when two sinful people bind themselves to each other for life. We both consider our husbands to be among the greatest blessings God has given us. We would not change them for the world, and their Christlike love has shaped and changed us in a thousand ways. But we both chose to marry men because of our commitment to Christ over our emotional and sexual preferences, and when we feel drawn to people outside our marriages (as most married people do from time to time), that draw is always toward women. For Rachel, the challenge is one of not wandering back to well-trodden roads. For me, it’s not leaning against hitherto unopened gates. A decade into marriage, neither of us expects these lures to evaporate. We believe that God could change our instincts, but we have no promise that he will, because blue-blood heterosexuality is not the goal of the Christian life: Jesus is.”

— *Confronting Christianity: 12 Hard Questions for the World's Largest Religion* by Rebecca McLaughlin

6. Discuss the reality of universal sexual temptations in various forms that invade our minds.

Matthew 5:28

28 But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. NIV