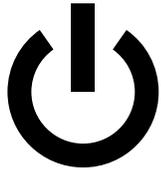


Title: Same-Sex Attraction & the Path of Faith

Speaker: Bruce Barlow

Key Verses: Romans 1:24-27; Lev. 18, 20; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; 1 Timothy 1:10; Titus 2:11-14

Summary: Same-sex attracted people should wrestle with God not write Him off.



Power Up: Take a moment to prepare

Bruce opens by sharing a series of conversations with someone he knows wrestling with same-sex attraction. Who do you know with this struggle?



Replay: Take some time to watch

Note Bruce's takeaways: **1)** we are all broken; **2)** we do what we do because we want what we want; **3)** God's creational intent is good; **4)** Scripture speaks; **5)** God is reliable; **6)** others have wrestled well.



Comment: Take some time to talk

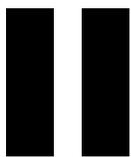
Bruce challenges his friend for giving himself "a pass." ***What does this mean? How do same-sex attracted people amplify their desires?***

Bruce describes the *shift* of a young man struggling with his faith and gender identity. ***What stages did this young man progress through? How does Bruce remain hopeful despite this young man's wandering?***

Read Genesis 1:26-28; 2:18-25. ***How is Christian teaching on sexuality and gender different than what culture currently says?*** Be specific.

Consider the key Scriptures Bruce cited. ***How do advocates of same-sex relationships explain these passages? How do you explain them?***

Citing Mark Yarhouse, Bruce describes the three-strand theory to sexual identity. ***What are the strands? How early do people now identify? How are "assertive advocates" and "sincere strugglers" different?***



Pause: Take a moment to pray

Thank God for His good creational intent in making you. Ask Him for purity in your sexual attractions and actions. Ask Him to help you become an empathic friend to those struggling with same-sex attraction.



Take Action: Take a step forward

No one will argue how pressing the topic of same-sex attraction is for today's church. Bruce listed several speakers, authors, and resources to help enrich our thinking on the topic. Consider engaging the discussion further by reading *Understanding Sexual Identity* (Yarhouse, 2013).

Bonus Features | Additional Notes and Quotes from Bruce Barlow

Power Track Summary: Does a same sex attracted person have to chuck their faith in order to sort out their attractions and identity? Terms like LGBTQ, transgender, and gender fluid aren't even in the Bible! Does God have anything to say about identity and sexuality that can help? He sure does. This Power Track offers hope in the midst of all the sexual brokenness.

About the Speaker: Bruce Barlow is Husband, Father, and Lead Pastor of Winona Lake Grace Brethren Church.

"The path of faith is willingness to wrestle with God. If people do not view God's word as authoritative on the topic, then they will likely divert from the path of faith."

Key Takeaways on the Path of Faith

1. We are all broken.

There is brokenness for all of us. We all need to be born again. It is the Bible's starting point."

Asked friend: Why don't you stop giving yourself a pass? What makes you think your drive for same-sex attraction is any different from opposite-sex attraction?

"All of our hearts are like the rest of the hearts: broken."

2. We do what we do because we want what we want.

Concerning a young man diverting from the faith: "I'll stay on the path of faith" shifted to "misery." Tried same-sex, fluid sex, Buddhism... He's searching. Knocking on the door.

Being your own God never works... Initial freedom does not provide lasting satisfaction.

3. Know God's creational intent.

Something in the single creation of Adam didn't fulfill his creational intent. Eve was essential.

Does male and female matter or not? Culture says, "No." Christianity says, "Yes."

4. What does Scripture say?

- Leviticus 18 & 20: Culture says, "The law is outdated. Power abuse, not sex, is the issue."
- Romans 1:24-27: Culture says, "This is only true for "unnatural" desire, not those born gay."
- 1 Cor. 6:9-11: Culture says, "You can't change." But Paul says "some were" changed.

Everyone has three strands to their sexual identity (Yarhouse): attraction, action, identity.

5. Does God know what he's talking about?

If you have an *assertive advocate* (those who are convinced others should accept their decision) of your sexual struggle, pray! Love them! Love does not mean unconditional approval. If you have *sincere strugglers*, sit down, dialogue, search Scripture, pray, love.

6. People (i.e., sincere strugglers) you should know: Jackie Hill-Perry, Sam Allbery, Rosario Champagne Butterfield, Christopher Yuan, Wesley Hill, Linda Seiler.