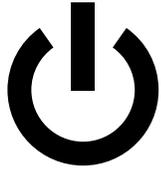


**Speaker:** Bruce Barlow

**Title:** Same Sex Desire & the Path of Faith

**Key Verses:** Gen. 1:27; 2:20–24; Romans 1:24–27; Lev. 18, 20; 1 Cor. 6:9–11; 1 Tim. 1:10

**Summary:** Biblical truth helps us wrestle with sexual desires in hope.



**Power Up:** Take a moment to prepare

Bruce shares a series of conversations with people wrestling with their sexual brokenness. Whom do you know that struggles with this?



**Replay:** Take some time to watch

Note Bruce's takeaways: **1)** we are all broken; **2)** God's creational intent is good; **3)** sin is sin; **4)** we must dethrone desire; **5)** beware of Satanic ploys & cultural trends; **6)** striking a posture of biblical welcome & hope.



**Comment:** Take some time to talk

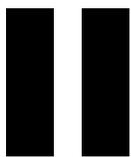
Bruce challenges his friend for giving himself "a pass." ***What does this mean? How do same-sex attracted people amplify their desires?***

Bruce warns against the recent trend to reinterpret the key biblical texts about homosexuality. ***What has been the historic biblical stance on homosexuality? What happens when you dismiss biblical authority?***

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?***

***How can you keep a loving posture toward LGBTQ community while advocating for biblical truth? How welcoming are you? Your church?***



**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 lists 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 a husband, father, grandparent, and Lead Pastor of Winona Lake Grace Brethren Church (IN). He cheers for the Green Bay Packers.

### 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.

Bruce asked a 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?"

#### 2. Know God's creational intent.

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

- **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.

There is no sin in sexual attraction, but not every attraction should be indulged.

#### 3. Sin is sin.

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.

#### 4. We need to dethrone desire.

"Do not chuck God and check him at the door while you're sorting out the temptations and the desires, the lusts. You stay on the path of faith as you sort it out with people who love you."

"It is normal in the teenage years to struggle with attractions and urges."

"We do what we do because we want what we want. This is the pattern from Genesis 3."

**Questions:** *Are my desires trustworthy? Are they legitimate? Are they healthy?*

"Holiness is our calling. God has bought our bodies with a price" (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

## 5. We need to beware of Satan's ploys and culture's labels.

Satan normalizes sinful behavior. Culture continues to spew out new terms and revised rules.

**Trend gender** is a newer term describing the fear of losing friends based upon gender identity.

## 6. We need to be ready as the church to welcome sexually broken people.

85% of LGBTQ people grew up in the church but left when they felt like no one in the church could talk with them about their gender struggles. They were more interested in the church changing their **posture** (i.e., being welcoming, kind) than their **theology** about sexuality.

Why do we think a same-sex marriage is going to be easier than a heterosexual marriage?

**Hopeful Scriptures:** Titus 2:11 – 15 (God's grace helps us say No); 1 Cor. 6:9 – 11 (homosexuality can be a thing of the past)

**Hopeful Stories (i.e., sincere strugglers):** Jackie Hill-Perry, Sam Allberry, Rosario Champagne Butterfield, Christopher Yuan, Laurie Creed, Wesley Hill.

**Hopeful Authors:** Mark Yarhouse, Preston Sprinkle

the reason.  
1 Peter 3:15