

## ***The Building Blocks of Homosexuality***

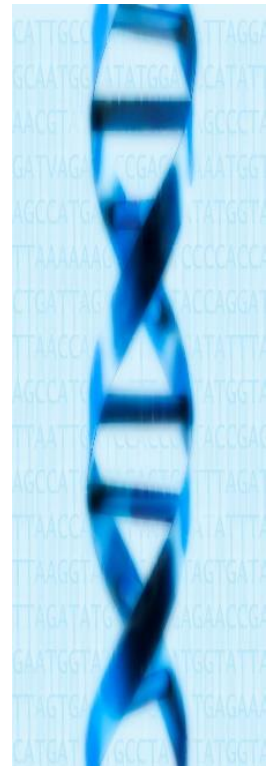
*The debate continues about the cause of homosexuality – nature, nurture, choice? Dan Hitz, Director of Reconciliation Ministries, presents this brief overview of the building blocks of homosexuality. Each person's life story is different, yet Jesus Christ has an answer for every man, woman, and adolescent that finds him/herself struggling with unwanted same-sex attractions. Understanding some of the potential roots of homosexuality helps us understand the steps to recovery. This article was originally published in a 2010 newsletter, and has been slightly updated for this 2019 edition.*



**Those of us who have struggled with unwanted homosexual attractions know that we didn't lie awake in bed one night trying to decide if we should be gay. Our attractions just happened.** Many of us felt different than the other kids of our gender for as long as we can remember. Some of us were called faggots long before we even knew what the word meant. It can feel like we're born this way. Especially when our personality is developed at a young age by life experiences that were completely out of our control – the majority of which we cannot even remember. This article will present a brief

overview of the basic building blocks of homosexuality. Understanding what some of the foundational issues may be, helps us to know what areas of our hearts are most in need of the grace of Jesus Christ and His healing presence.

**Why has the secular community historically presented the idea of a genetic link to homosexuality?** Sharon Begley summed up the answer in her 2008 *Newsweek Magazine* article entitled “Does DNA Make Some Men Gay?” when she quoted Dr. Rosenberg. “By linking homosexuality to the genes, says New York psychiatrist Kenneth Paul Rosenberg, Hamer’s Study shows that being gay is not ‘a deviant choice and [the result of] a lack of will. It is at least partly a biological orientation, as important to one’s constitution as eye color.’”<sup>1</sup> In the *Love Won Out* series, Focus on the Family explains the error of accepting behavior based on a biological predisposition. “A genetic link to some behaviors does not prove the idea of normalcy or rightness. Look at alcoholism or propensities towards anger. While these have been promoted as having a genetic linkage, there are few, if any, in our society who would promote these behaviors as OK just because they are linked genetically.”<sup>2</sup> The truth is that a conclusive genetic link to homosexuality has not been found. In the latest position statement on homosexuality, The American Psychological Association writes, “Although much research has examined the possible genetic, hormonal, developmental, social, and cultural influences on sexual orientation, no findings have emerged that permit scientists to conclude that sexual orientation is determined by any particular factor or factors.”<sup>3</sup> Simply stated, no concrete biological cause for homosexuality has ever been found. No matter what the cause of homosexuality, Scripture is clear that it is one of many sins that can be overcome. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 reads, “Don’t you know that those who do wrong will have no share in the Kingdom of God? Don’t fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin, who are idol worshipers, adulterers, male prostitutes, homosexuals, thieves, greedy people, drunkards, abusers, and swindlers – none of these will have a share in the Kingdom of God. **There was a time when some of you were just like that, but now your sins have been washed away, and you have been set apart for God.** You have been made right with God because of what the Lord Jesus Christ and the Spirit of our God have done for you.” We may not have chosen to have same-sex attractions, but we can choose what to do with those attractions.



**There are many theories concerning the roots of same-sex attraction. For years the most influential theory has been the *Developmental Model*, which looks at emotional and family of origin issues in the development of homosexuality. I want to clarify that not everyone who has same-sex attraction fits into the Developmental Model.** While the majority of people struggling with same-sex attraction have come from dysfunctional families, others have not. Younger people in today's culture may be more heavily influenced by their subculture's promotion of homosexuality and transgender identities than those of us of older generations. Being LGBTQ identified in a performing arts high school or college actually gives an individual more accolades in this generation, while it formerly gave the individual a larger target for bullying in the 70's and 80's. As Joe Dallas points out in his book, *Speaking of Homosexuality*, there are plenty of heterosexual people who have experienced many of the ingredients in the Developmental Model, yet they do not have same-sex attractions.<sup>4</sup> All of these insights can serve to help us recognize the complexity of homosexual development, and point us to the Lord for His insight in overcoming unwanted same-sex attraction. Through the years of counseling many people with unwanted LGBTQ issues, I have noticed that the vast majority of people do relate to the Developmental Model, which makes it important to understand.

**Before we look at some of the environmental building blocks of homosexuality, I want to talk to the parents who are reading this article.**

My wife and I have five kids. The youngest is 21. Raising teenagers was the most difficult thing I have ever done in my life. It was more difficult than growing up with a paranoid schizophrenic mother, and more difficult than walking away from homosexuality. We have all made mistakes when raising our children, and we have all done things we wish we could undo. The important thing is to admit our mistakes and repent to those we have wronged. Remember that your child's perceptions were very influential in shaping his or her worldview, and may not reflect the actual reality of how he or she was raised. Please do not read this list as an indictment against you or your parenting style. It is simply intended to be a brief look into the heart of one struggling with homosexuality. If you made mistakes, put them on the cross and let the Lord work in your own heart as well as the heart of your son or daughter. He or she is responsible for his or her own decisions.



**This list is intended as a brief overview of the most common environmental factors contributing to male homosexuality. We will also look at some additional factors common in the development of lesbianism.** Each person has his own life experiences which may or may not be included in this list.

**The emotional roots of homosexuality often begin in a breakdown in the relationship with a same-sex parent.** For males, the father may be either extremely passive or demeaning. The boy feels disconnected from his father and fails to develop a sense of maleness as he grows up. This in turn hinders him from connecting to other male peers.

**The mother may be overprotective and/or try to gain the emotional fulfillment from the son that she cannot get from her husband.** Many of the men I've talked to through the years explain that their mothers seemed to place them in the role of being an emotional support or pseudo-husband. The boys feel uneasy about this unnatural relationship, but are often unable to express their own feelings and desires.

**The boy may relate more to his mother, sisters, and other females in his life than other males.** When the hormones hit at puberty, he is then drawn to the gender that holds the intrigue and mystique. **Some boys are simply more creative and less athletic than the average boy. The reaction of parents and peers is critical here.** If the neighborhood boys begin to tease him for expressing his

creativity and/or demonstrating his lack of athletic ability he may feel less masculine than they. They may even label him as a gay based on his lack of athleticism. A wise father will recognize the specific giftings in his son and reaffirm his masculinity as expressed in the son's own skill set.

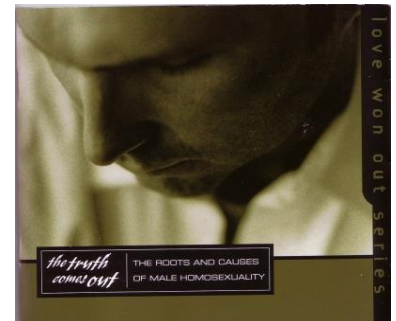
**Envy and jealousy are often key factors in homosexuality.** Very often, males with same-sex attraction are drawn to other males with the qualities they feel are lacking in themselves. The boy in the locker room who feels physically weak and insecure may be drawn to the other boys who are more physically fit and more confident. Leanne Payne calls this concept “**cannibal compulsion**” noting that cannibals historically consumed the people whose attributes they desired.<sup>5</sup> This is also demonstrated as older men may be drawn to the youthfulness and perceived innocence of a younger man, while the younger man may be drawn to the fatherly nature of the older male.

**Occasionally, men with same-sex attraction may crave sexual encounters with other males out of anger and a desire to destroy in others those traits that they feel lacking in themselves.** Multiple clients have explained their desire to have a sexual encounter with specific types of men with the intent of destroying the perceived attribute in the other male that they feel is lacking in themselves. One man confessed to having encounters with men whom he perceived had a perfect family, in order to wreak havoc on that man's family.

**A vast majority of clients who are struggling with unwanted homosexual attractions have also been the victim of childhood sexual abuse.** When a child's sexuality is awakened early, it has a devastating effect in the heart causing a confusing whirlwind of emotions with deep seated emotional scars. Not all gay-identified people have been abused, but an overwhelming percentage of them have.

The booklet *The Truth Comes Out: The Roots and Causes of Male Homosexuality* from Focus on the Family<sup>6</sup> lists the following environmental factors in male homosexuality:

1. Sexual violation or experimentation with men or boys
2. Incest or molestation
3. Exposure to pornography
4. Negative spiritual influences
5. Media influences
6. Personality temperament
7. Negative body image
8. Peer labeling, harassment or alienation
9. Fear of – or an inability to relate to – the opposite sex



**There are some differences between male homosexuality and female homosexuality. Males often feel inadequate in their masculinity and wish to connect with other males in a subconscious attempt to receive additional masculinity from them. Females on the other hand, tend to see their femininity as a liability or an inferior quality.** A woman may have grown up seeing her mother as a victim of abuse by the father or she may have received mistreatment from significant males in own her life. She may perceive that being feminine is unsafe and detach from her femininity while simultaneously withdrawing from males whom she may perceive as predatory. Her desire for relationships leads her toward other women.

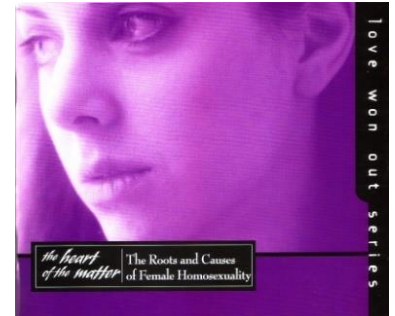
**Females, more often than males, may develop same-sex attractions later in life. This may happen as a woman receives mistreatment from significant men in her life, cuts her heart off from men, and turns to another female for emotional support.** If the other woman offering the support is unhealthy herself, a codependent relationship may form. Many women have been drawn into a lesbian relationship as the emotional attachment turns to codependency which then becomes eroticized.



**Other building blocks of female homosexuality are similar to those in males** including the breakdown in relationship with the same-sex parent, difficulty connecting to same-sex peers, personality and interests more commonly associated with the other gender, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse.

The booklet *The Heart of the Matter: The Roots and Causes of Female Homosexuality* from Focus on the Family<sup>7</sup> provides the follow statistics from a study of responses from 265 women to look at some of the factors that may have contributed to their lesbian attractions:

- 55.7% received emotional trauma including sexual innuendoes and specific sexual remarks that made her feel violated
- 69.1% experienced emotional abuse
- 66.4% were victims of sexual abuse
- 53.2% were verbally abused
- 39.6% felt abandoned
- 32.5% were victims of physical abuse
- 20.0% felt utterly neglected



**Regardless of the specific causes of homosexual attractions in a person's life, an open and honest relationship with the Lord is the first step in overcoming unwanted same-sex attraction.** Remember the words of 1 Corinthians 6:11 covered earlier in this article, "There was a time when some of you were just like that, but now your sins have been washed away, and you have been set apart for God. You have been made right with God because of what the Lord Jesus Christ and the Spirit of our God have done for you." **For those who have been wounded by their earthly parents, Father God is able to provide what their earthly mother and father were unable to give.** He can heal the wounds they have inflicted. Psalm 27:10 reads, "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take care of me."

Many people who are raised in the church keep their struggle to themselves out of fear and shame. **We must be honest about our battle and share it with safe, mature Christians who will walk with us towards Christ. The church must be a safe place where we can open our hearts and receive the help and discipleship we need.** 1 John 1:9 reads, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." The overcomer will need trained prayer ministers, pastors, and counselors who are familiar with the journey and can help the struggler bring the wounds and strongholds to Jesus at the cross. He or she will also need other safe Christians who will simply walk with him or her and show the love of Christ.

## References

- 1 Begley, Sharon. *Does DNA Make Some Men Gay?*, Newsweek Magazine, Updated 2/20/08. Retrieved from <http://www.newsweek.com/id/113943> on 9/3/2008.
- 2 *Straight Answers: Exposing the Myths and Facts about Homosexuality*, Love Won Out Series, Focus on the Family Publishing, Colorado Springs, CO. 2000, p. 10.
- 3 American Psychological Association. *Answers to Your Questions: For a Better Understanding of Sexual Orientation and Homosexuality*. Washington, DC. 2008, p2. Retrieved from <https://www.apa.org/topics/lgbt/orientation.pdf> on 1/11/2019.
- 4 Dallas, Joe. *Speaking of Homosexuality: Discussing the Issues with Kindness and Clarity*, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI. 2016.
- 5 Payne, Leanne. *The Broken Image*, Hamewith Books, Grand Rapids, MI. 1996.
- 6 *The Truth Comes Out: The Roots and Causes of Male Homosexuality*, Love Won Out Series, Focus on the Family Publishing, Colorado Springs, CO, 2002. pp. 10-11.
- 7 *The Heart of the Matter: The Roots and Causes of Female Homosexuality*, Love Won Out Series, Focus on the Family Publishing, citing Anne Paulk, *A Study on the Roots, Causes and Treatment of Lesbianism*, Colorado Springs, CO. 2001.

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