

# Understanding Christian Identity

## Resources:

- 1) *The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert* by Rosaria Champagne Butterfield (actually any book by her is fantastic)  
Good Q&A podcast with her: <https://leadership.lifeway.com/2019/01/22/5lq-episode-309-rosaria-butterfield/>
- 2) *God and the Transgender Debate* by Andrew T. Walker (Forwarded by Dr. Mohler)
- 3) *Spectacular Sins* by John Piper
- 4) *Faces of Evil* by John Feinberg
- 5) *How Long O Lord?* by D.A. Carson
- 6) Greg Morse (Desiring God Article): <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/play-the-man-you-are>
- 7) Jason (JBMW): <https://cbmw.org/topics/transgenderism/jbmw-21-1-confronting-the-transgender-storm-new-covenant-reflections-from-deuteronomy-225/>
- 8) *Passions of the Heart: Biblical Counsel for Stubborn Sexual Sins* by Dr. John Street

Is it possible to be a homosexual (gay/lesbian/bisexual), or transgender, Christian? What are your thoughts?

Everyone agreed that it is possible **call** one-self a “homosexual (gay/lesbian/bisexual) or transgender Christian”. But it is not **right**.

## Redefinitions

There are public authors who are doing a dance around the term “homosexual” and redefine the term as: *Someone who simply desires intimacy with someone of the same gender*. But may stop short of having *physical* intimacy.

There are several issues with this. While at the core, yes, someone who practices homosexuality desires intimacy. The structure of the word “homosexual” alone, indicates someone who has *physical sexual relations* with the same gender (homo = same; sexual = engaging in sex).

*Sex is not merely intimacy*. But it is *physical* and includes *emotional* intimacy. *One simply should not separate the two*. This would be similar to what Satan tried to do with Eve in the garden of Eden and succeeded (Gen. 3).

When they were challenged on this definition, they then backpedaled and have said that they are merely *celibate, same-sex-attracted*, Christians.

Now remember, homosexuality and transgender behavior **are evil** (*Lev. 18:22; Deut. 22:5*). These are considered an abomination to the LORD!

We must also remember **Colossians 3:5-6**:

*“Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, **passion, evil desire, and covetousness**, which is idolatry.*

***On account of these the wrath of God is coming.”***

The mere **desire** for something that is **forbidden** is wrong and should **be put to death**. Meaning, do not practice or entertain such desire.

## Definitions

Greg Morse said it best: “Satan tries to obscure sins, by *rendering them nearly impossible to define*. He smuggles effeminacy into the church by forbidding any specific definition...” (<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/play-the-man-you-are>).

If the devil can confuse people about definitions around acts of sin. The world is the playground for those who have a clouded mind.

*“For all that is in the world—the **desires of the flesh** and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world”* **1 John 2:16**

It is important to have good definitions. Therefore, it is equally, if not more important, to focus on what it means to be a Christian...

## What Defines a Christian?

### Quick Overview: Romans 1-7

As a general and very basic outline, it is important to understand the flow of Paul’s logic...

1. State and decline of humanity (Rom. 1)
2. Everyone is self-righteous and will not escape (Rom. 2)
3. All of humanity has sinned and are guilty (Rom. 3:1-20)
4. Faith in God’s promise is the only way to justification (Rom. 3:21-4:25)
5. Christ is God’s promise for the new age (Rom. 5)
6. The justified are slaves of righteousness (Rom. 6)
7. The purpose of the law and how the flesh conflicts (Rom. 7)

## Romans 8:1-30 – Seven Characteristics of a Christian...

When a person places their faith in Jesus Christ as the promise from God for eternal salvation (*John 3:16*). The Holy Spirit will enter into them and gradually change them (*Rom. 5:5; Tit. 3:5-7*). How the Spirit changes are described in several ways, which correspond to Seven Characteristics of a Christian...

1. Changed **Position** (8:1) -> By the judicial determination of the Spirit

*“There is therefore now **no condemnation** for those who are in Christ Jesus.”*

2. Changed **Influence** (8:2-4) -> By the power and authority of the Spirit

*“For the **law of the Spirit** of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the **law of sin and death**. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he **condemned sin** in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”*

Sin and death control, pulling a person down and away from God to be eternally separated. **Cf. Rom. 8:21**... “... slavery to corruption ...”

The Spirit controls by pulling a person back towards God and into obedience.

3. Changed **Thinking** (8:5-9) -> By the indwelling of the Spirit (v. 9)

*“For those who **live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh**, but those who **live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit**. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. **You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit**, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you.”*

4. Changed **Behavior** (8:10-11) -> By life from the Spirit (v. 9)

*“But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, **the Spirit is life** because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead **will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.**”*

**Key Reference:** “Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and

*things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”*  
**Gal. 5:16–24**

5. Changed **Obligations** (8:12-13) -> By accountability from the Spirit

*“So then, brothers, we are **debtors**, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if **by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.**”*

6. Changed **Relationship** (8:14-17) -> By leading and adoption from the Spirit

*“For all who are **led by the Spirit of God** are **sons of God**. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’ **The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God**, and if children, then heirs— heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.”*

- a. From Slavery...
  - i. No longer a child of wrath (Eph. 2:3; Col. 3:5-9)
- b. Into the household...
  - i. No longer considered subpar to the family

*“No longer do I call you servants (slaves), for the servant (slave) does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends.”*  
**John 15:15**

7. Changed **Hope** (8:18-30) -> By a help from the Spirit

*“... creation waits with **eager longing** for the revealing of the sons of God ... creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God ... we ourselves, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as **we wait eagerly** for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies ... **in this hope we were saved**. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience ... **the Spirit helps us in our weakness** ... we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.”*

The Spirit changes a person from sinful, fleshly, and decaying bodies into future glorious and new bodies.