

Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. *John 17:17*

Addressing LGBTQ topics with teens requires a connection of truth and grace. It's essential to ground the conversation in biblical truth while also expressing love and compassion. Encourage your teens to understand that all people are valued and loved by God, regardless of their assumed identity or sexual orientation. Remind them that our call as Christians is to love others as Christ loves us, which requires approaching these topics with empathy, respect, and care while also pointing to the truth of repentance and grace offered by God.

➤ **conversation starter**

How do you think we should approach conversations about LGBTQ topics? What does it mean to you to speak the truth in love?

Have you had conversations with friends about LGBTQ issues? What thoughts or questions do you have about these discussions from a biblical perspective?

➤ **navigating the conversation:**

- **Understand the Bible's Perspective:** Begin by exploring what the Bible says about human identity, relationships, and sexuality. Emphasize that all discussions should be rooted in Scriptural truth. (See Gen. 1-2; Matt. 5-7; Rom. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Eph. 4-5.)
- **Emphasize Love and Respect:** Stress the importance of approaching these conversations with love and respect for all individuals and reflecting Christ's love.
- **Encourage Listening:** Promote active listening in conversations about LGBTQ issues. Understanding others' experiences and viewpoints is important, even when they differ from our beliefs.
- **Discuss Compassion and Kindness:** Remind teens of the importance of compassion and kindness in all interactions, especially concerning topics in which people may feel vulnerable or misunderstood.
- **Model Christlike Behavior:** Demonstrate through your actions and words how to engage in these discussions in a way that is loving and respectful.
- **Focus on the Individual:** Encourage seeing people as individuals who are loved by God, not just as representatives of a particular group or identity.
- **Address Cultural Perspectives:** Discuss how cultural perspectives on LGBTQ issues can differ and the importance of discerning cultural influences from biblical teachings.
- **Pray for Wisdom:** Suggest praying together for wisdom, understanding, and the right words to use in sensitive conversations.
- **Seek Guidance from Church Leaders:** If there are uncertainties or a need for deeper understanding, consider seeking insight and guidance from church leaders or trusted Christian mentors.

