



## Summary

Lisa Beardsley-Hardy, Director of Education,  
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist

# It's Complicated



Add another family member

Relationship Status:

Interested in:

Looking for:

Political Views:

Religious Views:

Single  
In a Relationship  
Engaged  
Married  
**It's Complicated**  
In an Open Relationship  
Widowed

Networking

# Learning Objectives

- 1. Biblical teaching on alternative sexualities**
- 2. Developmental and sociological factors**
- 3. Membership and ministry**
- 4. Legal issues**
- 5. Having a greater understanding of alternative sexualities**
- 6. Educating church members**

# Learning Objective #1

## Biblical Teaching on Alternative Sexualities

- Describe the Biblical teaching on alternative sexualities.
  - Our positions are based on the hermeneutical principles of *sola scriptura* and *tota scriptura*, where Scripture interprets Scripture.
  - We believe the Bible is divinely inspired and requires the Holy Spirit for interpretation.
  - We must not edit out what we think is objectionable or read into it what is not there.
  - We are judged by the Word. We do not sit in judgment on the Word.

# Learning Objective #1 (cont.)

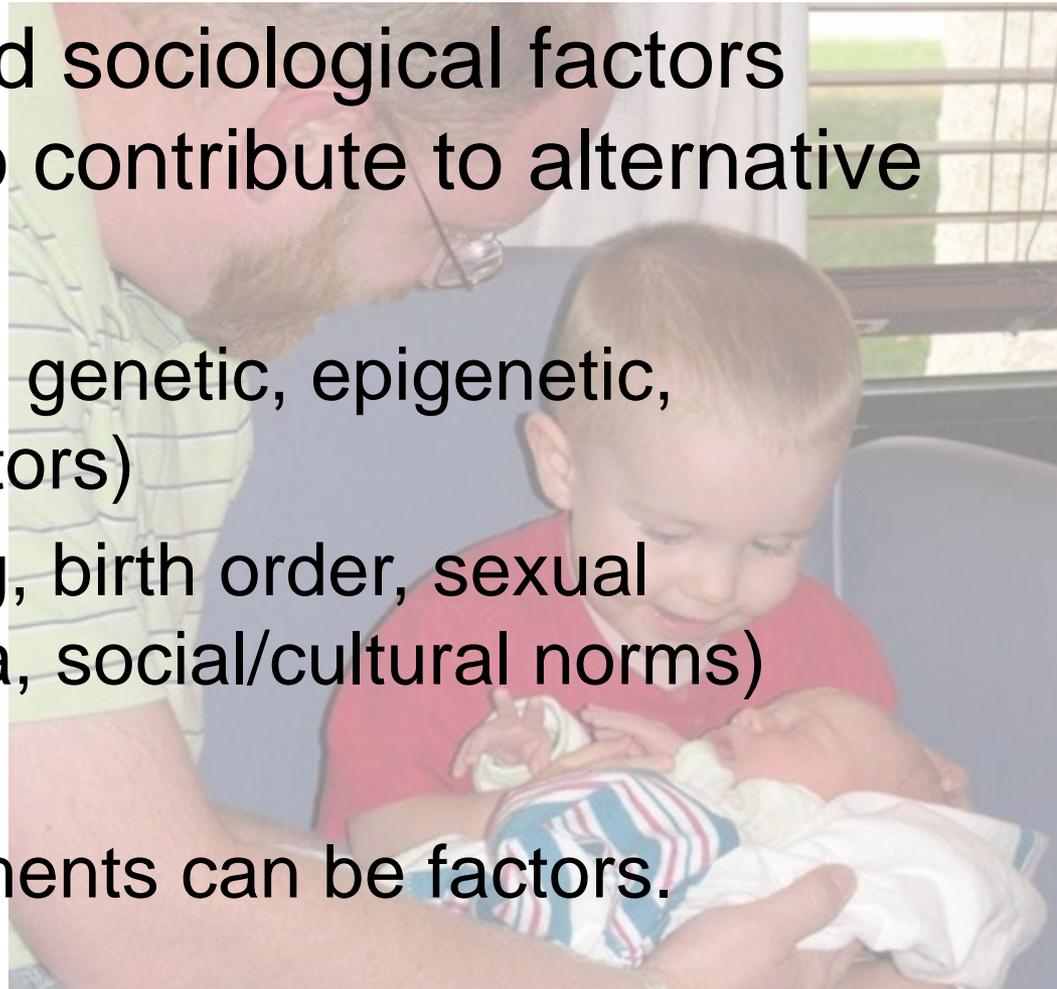
## Biblical Teaching on Alternative Sexualities

- We were created in the Image of God, male and female.
- The monogamous union in marriage of a man and a woman is the divinely ordained foundation of the family and the only morally appropriate locus of intimate sexual expression.
- The family in turn is the basis for all of human society.
- All alternative expressions of sexuality fall short of the creation ideal and some, such as homosexual practice, are categorically forbidden “without any exceptions” or qualifications, such as whether they are consensual, loving or committed. (“Old Testament Principles,” Roy Gane)
- (While all humans are fallen and subject to temptation, temptation itself is not sin. Thus, temptation to homosexual behavior or orientation by themselves are not sin. Rather, it is the choice to engage in homosexual acts that the Bible identifies as

# Learning Objective #2

## Developmental and Sociological Factors

- Describe some facets of the developmental and sociological factors that are thought to contribute to alternative sexualities.
  - Nature (hormonal, genetic, epigenetic, embryological factors)
  - Nurture (parenting, birth order, sexual experience, media, social/cultural norms)
  - Choice
  - All the above elements can be factors. However . . .





# Learning Objective #2 (cont.)

## Developmental and Sociological Factors

**“There is no consensus among scientists about the exact reasons that an individual develops a heterosexual, bisexual, or homosexual orientation. 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. Many think that nature and nurture both play complex roles; most people experience little or no sense of choice about their sexual orientation.”**

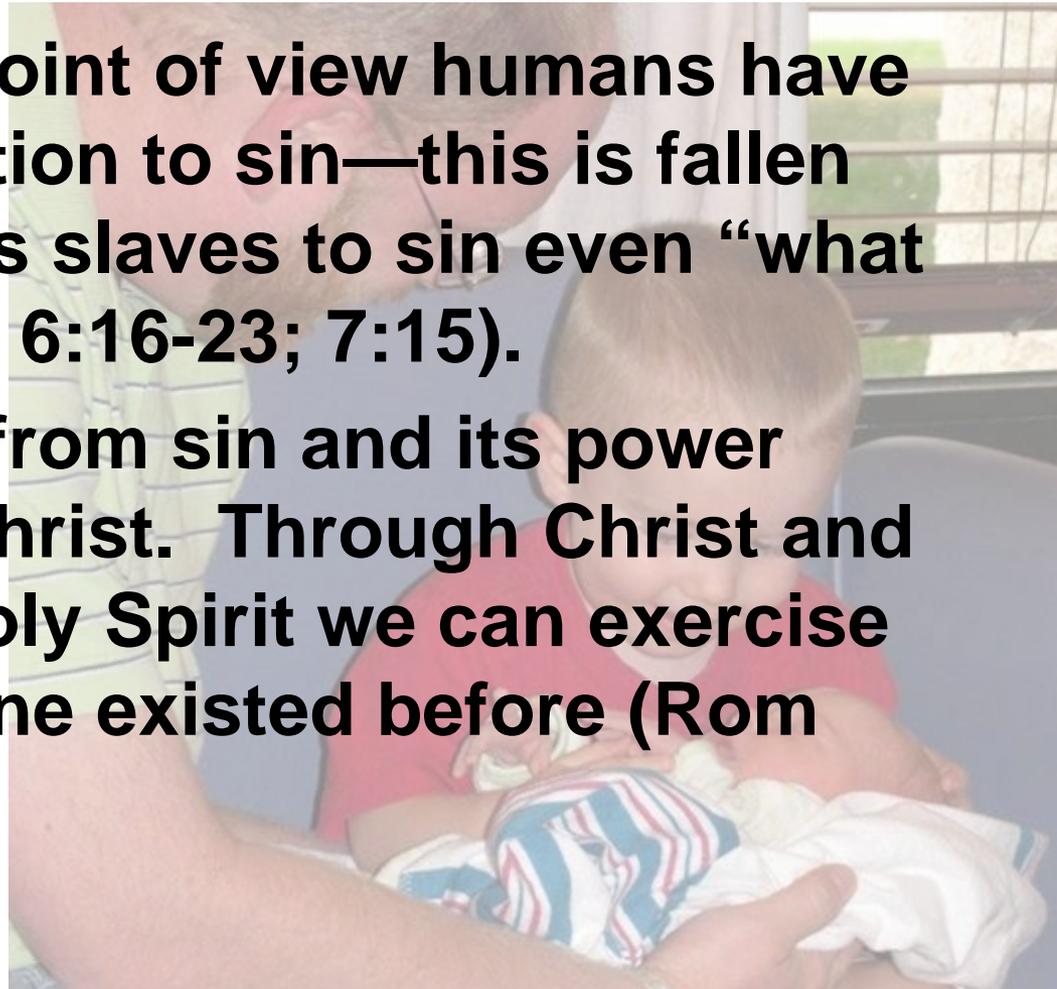


**“What Causes a Person to Have a Particular Sexual Orientation?” Page 4. APA Retrieved 2013-03-21. <http://www.apa.org/topics/lgbt/orientation.aspx?item=4>**

# Learning Objective #2 (cont.)

## Developmental and Sociological Factors

- **As regards the matter of choice:**
  - **From a biblical point of view humans have a natural orientation to sin—this is fallen human nature. As slaves to sin even “what I hate I do” (Rom 6:16-23; 7:15).**
  - **God delivers us from sin and its power through Jesus Christ. Through Christ and the indwelling Holy Spirit we can exercise choice where none existed before (Rom 8:1-17)**



# Learning Objective #3

## Membership and Ministry

- Describe how the church should relate to:
  - Membership matters
    - We should either follow or revise the *Church Manual*, which governs such matters.
    - When a person practices sexually intimate behaviors with someone else outside of heterosexual marriage, if they are a member, they should be disciplined; if they are not a member, they should not be granted membership.
    - Positions of leadership and responsibility within the church presuppose church membership.

# Learning Objective #3 (cont.)

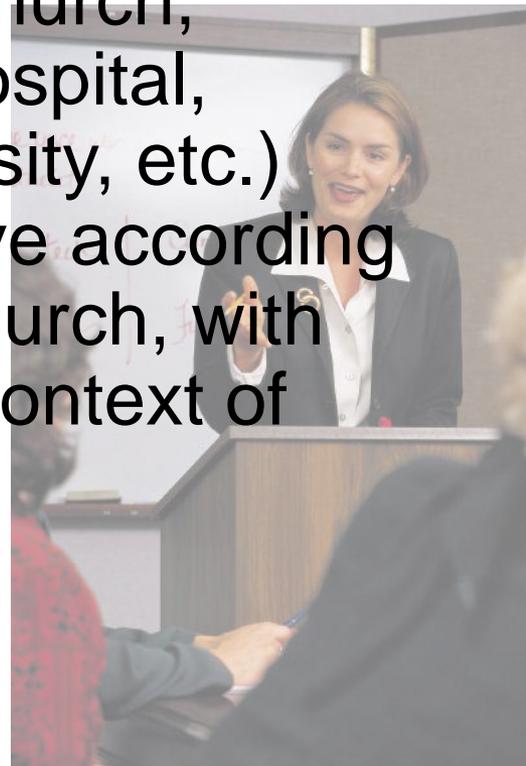
## Membership and Ministry

- Describe how the church should relate to:
  - Ministry for people of alternative sexualities, orientations, and practices
    - Compassionately minister to all without differentiating between sexual orientation or sexual practice.
    - Invite all to participate in worship and fellowship, though membership may only be granted to those abiding by biblical standards of sexual behavior.
    - Demonstrate interest and Christian love.
    - Manifest a redemptive attitude toward every person who in any way enters the sphere of the church's influence.

# Learning Objective #4 (a)

## Legal Issues

- Describe the legal implications of alternative sexuality practices:
  - a) Denominational employment (e.g., clinic, conference, union conference, church, division, General Conference, hospital, publishing house, school, university, etc.) should be limited to those that live according to the sexual standards of the church, with sexual relationships only in the context of heterosexual marriage.



# Learning Objective #4 (a) (cont.)

## Legal Issues

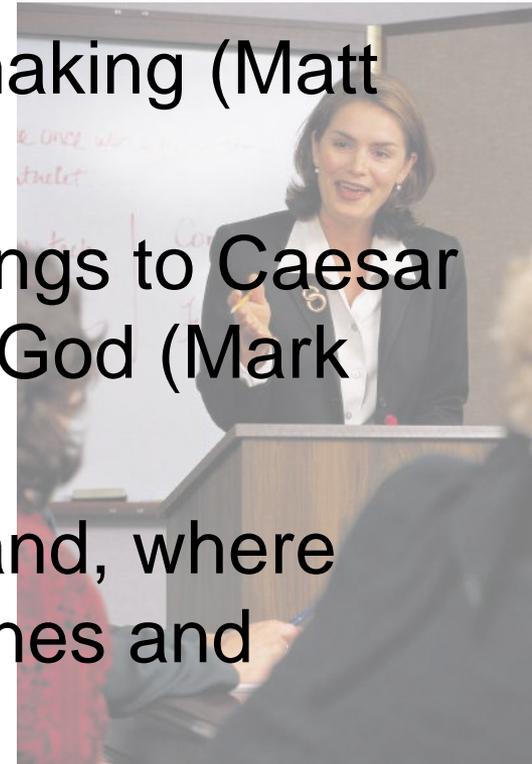
- Employment is based on principles in official Church statements
- Apply the following five best practices:
  - Transparency and accountability
  - Consistency in applying policy
  - Documenting expectations
  - Hiring for organizational mission
  - Modeling Christ in relating to others



# Learning Objective #4 (a) (cont.)

## Legal Issues

- Develop clear basic conditions of employment
- Apply the following principles:
  - Be wise as serpents in decision making (Matt 10:16).
  - Render to Caesar that which belongs to Caesar and to God that which belongs to God (Mark 12:17)
  - Know and follow the laws of the land, where they do not conflict with the doctrines and beliefs of the church.



# Learning Objective #4 (a) (cont.)

## Legal Issues

- Know and apply Church policy consistently.
- Know and apply protection laws that exist for employees that are consistent with the moral standards of the church.
- Engage and maintain legal counsel. Don't wait for a crisis to occur.

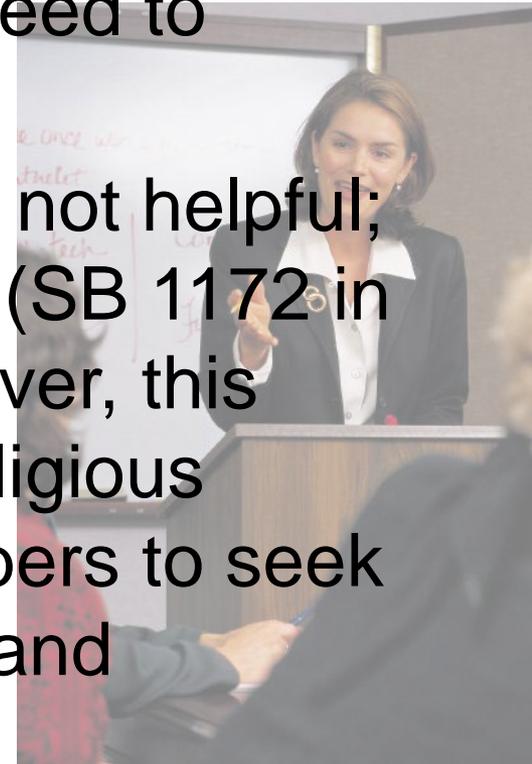


# Learning Objective #4 (b)

## Legal Issues

### b) Counseling

- Recognize and address the risks of increased morbidity and mortality among the GLBT community and the need to provide education and care.
- Recognize that all methods are not helpful; some may be harmful or illegal (SB 1172 in CA-Therapy for Minors). However, this needs to be balanced by the religious freedom of ministers and members to seek religious goals of sexual purity and continence.

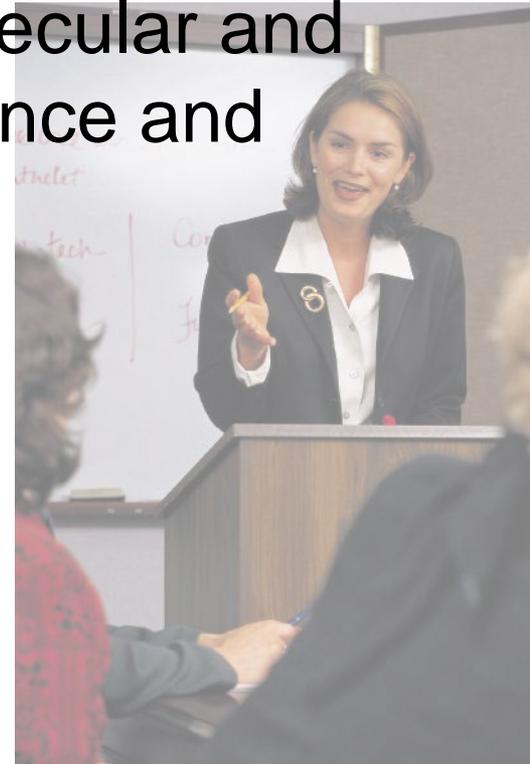


# Learning Objective #4 (b)

## Legal Issues

### b) Counseling

- Normal  $\neq$  moral; is  $\neq$  ought; legal  $\neq$  right in God's sight.
- Recognize the implications of secular and naturalistic assumptions of science and professional organizations.



# Learning Objective #4 (c)

## Legal Issues

### c) Religious liberty, advocacy, and social justice

- We are committed to:
  - The separation of church and state.
  - Always speak up on behalf of the Church's religious freedom and that of its members in being able to practice and promote God's plan for marriage.

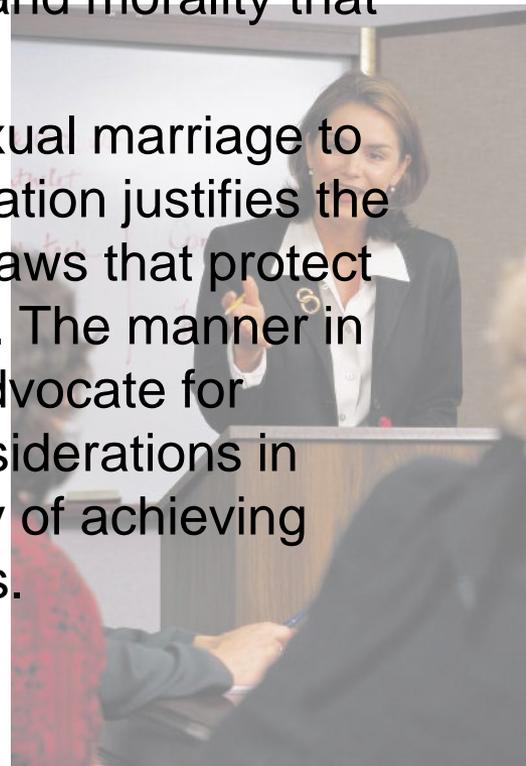


# Learning Objective #4 (c)

## Legal Issues

### c) Religious liberty, advocacy, and social justice

- We are committed to:
  - Supporting laws that further civil virtue and morality that safeguards society.
  - The importance of traditional, heterosexual marriage to child-rearing and raising the next generation justifies the Church and its members in supporting laws that protect marriage between a man and a woman. The manner in which a church and its members will advocate for marriage will depend on prudential considerations in relation to the practicality and possibility of achieving political success in various communities.



# Learning Objective #4 (d)

## Legal Issues

- d) Freedom of speech, “hate speech,” and “giving the trumpet a certain sound”
- Know the laws in your particular country.
  - Educate pastors, teachers and church leaders on the laws and regulations.
  - Know the official church statements and let these be your guide when speaking publically.
  - Do not compromise the Church’s teaching on moral matters, but always communicate these truths with respect, love, and compassion for all persons.



# Learning Objective #4 (d) (cont.)

## Legal Issues

d) Freedom of speech, “hate speech,” and “giving the trumpet a certain sound”

- Remember that standards of sexual behavior apply to everyone.
- We should respect the law and respect individuals but take care not to misrepresent God’s laws to people or governments.
- Let us season our speech with love and grace and speak as Jesus would under any circumstances.



# Learning Objective #4 (e)

## Legal Issues

### e) Better language and communicative skills

- Don't automatically assume that LGBT are not in the audience.
- Make appropriate distinctions among the following:
  - Sexual identity
  - Sexual orientation
  - Sexual preference
  - Sexual role
  - Sexual performance



# Learning Objective #5

## Having a Greater Understanding

- Have a greater understanding of alternative sexualities.
  - “It’s more nuanced than I had considered.”



# Learning Objective #6

## Educating Church Members

- Describe the content and methods to educate church members on some realities about alternative sexualities.

# Learning Objective #6 (cont.)

## Educating Church Members

- Speak the truth in love, "restoring hope in and through Biblical truth as it is in Jesus...the compassion of Jesus in dealing with sin...Christ's grace and His remedy for sin...clarity regarding sin and God's power to overcome sin....speak the truth as Jesus spoke the truth—to remember that every word by His disciples should be a word that helps someone else to become a disciple of Christ." ("The Truth as it is in Jesus," Ted Wilson)

# Learning Objective #6 (cont.)

## Educating Church Members

### Statement: Part 1

“I’m praying for a miracle among the followers of Jesus. A miracle of the transforming work of the Holy Spirit that will bring about a role reversal within the community of faith. So that the open-armed welcomers, who are so eager to have warm relationships with everyone that they uncritically overlook people’s faults, will take a second look at the dangers of overindulgent tolerance. That in spite of their super-sensitivity to the reality that some will have a toxic reaction to the slightest hint of disapproval or criticism, they will remember that the wounds and bruises of a faithful friend are much better than honey-smooth reassurances that all is well when it is not.”

“What Psychology and Psychiatry Have to Say About Homosexuality and Other Alternative Sexualities,” Peter Swanson

# Learning Objective #6 (cont.)

## Educating Church Members

### Statement: Part 2

“I’m praying for a transforming miracle for the doorkeepers and bouncers in our midst who are so quick to judge, and so eager to deliver severe rebukes and censure. I pray that they will become more like that incomparable Man who so frustrated the religious leaders of old that they harshly condemned Him for welcoming outcasts and sinners and eating with them.”

“What Psychology and Psychiatry Have to Say About Homosexuality and Other Alternative Sexualities,” Peter Swanson

# Learning Objective #6 (cont.)

## Educating Church Members

“Let us look always to the Lord and His Word as we submit ourselves wholly to Him for His leading in our personal lives and in His remnant church as we anticipate Christ’s soon second coming.”

(“The Truth as it is in Jesus,” Ted Wilson)

# Learning Objective #6 (cont.)

## Educating Church Members

Uphold Jesus, our living Great High Priest who is "able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

(Heb 7:25 KJV)

# Lingering questions

- Distinction between orientation and action
  - Sinful nature vs. sinful action, innocence vs. shame and guilt
- Transgender, transsexual
- Other areas of sexuality in need of Divine healing and caring presence by parents, family and church.



A smiling man with short dark hair, wearing a blue button-down shirt, is holding a light gray rectangular sign. The sign contains the text "What one action are you going to take?". The man is looking towards the camera with a friendly expression. The background is plain white.

**What one action  
are  
you going to  
take?**