



Pride Prayer Guide

10 Prayers and Meditations on Pride Month, Same Sex Attraction, Gender Confusion and Sensualism

prideprayerguide.org

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Introduction

Pride Month, Sensualism, Same Sex Attraction and Gender Confusion

Sex is a wonderful blessing to be enjoyed within a marriage between one man and one woman. Sex outside of these God-given parameters will only do harm to the human soul.

If you agree with this premise, “Pride Month”, celebrated each June to “celebrate sexual diversity” and foster awareness of LGBTQ+ issues, is likely to grieve or concern you. The enormous upheaval in social and political norms around sexual morality over the last decades is astounding. We know that sex outside of God’s parameters harms the human soul, and the damage caused by sexual immorality should grieve us, not be celebrated.

The roots of pride month, and the way it resonates for so many in society, are far deeper and broader than same sex attraction and gender confusion. What are the drivers of this resonance?

“If it feels good, do it” is a classic cliché describing the worldview we will call “sensualism.” What I sense, what I experience – becomes who I am, my identity. Sensualism means, for our purposes, the worldview where, my feelings define my moral values, and often, my very identity. Even the catchphrase, “you be you”, is a symptom of this spirit of sensualism. It is worship of feelings, comfort and sex. These things are elevated so high that they become who I am. Put together, it is worship of self, and it is a form of pride. How appropriate, then, that one expression of sensualism is celebrated as “Pride Month.”

Of course, sensualism is not the only cause of same sex attraction, gender confusion or any sort of sexual addiction (though it is often a factor), but a society where sensualism is such a big deal provides fertile ground for anyone who experiences same sex attraction or gender confusion to believe that those feelings define who they are, and to have that belief widely accepted and sympathized with.

Sensualism, same sex attraction, gender confusion and sexual addiction are different, but this prayer guide treats them together during Pride Month because there is a common root in all.

We especially focus on sensualism because it seems to be the best description for the spiritual root of something deadly and pervasive in our society. This touches all of us.

What do we do about it?

The cultural landslide is seen in very public forums: news, entertainment, TV broadcasts and newspaper op-eds. For those of us disturbed by the change, our first instinct is that if we want to oppose this movement, we should use the same tools: social media, lobbying and other public forums. While these are powerful tools, if we fixate on them we might miss deeper elements of a great spiritual battle waging over our nation. Ephesians 6:12 reminds us that “our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” But “the weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world.” (2 Cor 10:4). Our primary weapon in this battle is prayer, which has divine power to *demolish* strongholds that set themselves up against the knowledge of God.

We are opposed by a powerful enemy who “prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8). The enemy knows what a precious gift of God our human gender and sexuality is, and knows that distortions of our gender and sexuality harm our bodies and souls.

Whenever your emotions react to celebrations of “sexual diversity” or immorality, please let it serve as a reminder that there are spiritual forces at work and your most powerful weapon against these forces is prayer. Hopefully, this prayer guide will give you some practical ideas on how to begin to pray.

Will prayer do any good?

In 1982, Open Doors, an organization founded by Brother Andrew to support persecuted Christians, called for a seven-year prayer campaign against the communist bloc. At that time, it would have seemed humanly impossible for the “iron curtain” to fall, but in 1989, seven years later, the Berlin Wall fell and the Soviet bloc was opened to the gospel.

Another seemingly impenetrable stronghold set up against the knowledge of God is Islam. In 1993 some Christians launched a concerted prayer movement for the Muslim world, especially during the fasting month of Ramadan, a time when many Muslims are seeking and spiritually hungry. Describing the effectiveness of this movement, Dr. David Garrison, a missions strategist and historian, states “We are in the midst of the greatest turning of Muslims to Christ in 14 centuries of Muslim-Christian interaction. More than 80% of all the Muslim movements to Christ in history have occurred in the past two to three decades, a time period that coincides with the modern prayer movement for Muslims.”

God loves to respond to the bold prayers of his saints. He can and has demolished strongholds, political, religious and ideological, that set themselves up against the knowledge of himself. He has moved against political and belief systems that appear completely closed off to any change so that those trapped in communism, Islam or other seemingly impenetrable “-isms” can know his good news. Who knows how God would respond to a concerted prayer movement against sensualism, but God may be waiting to act until his church recognizes that the political, cultural and even psychological elements of the battle are secondary and we must first fight on our knees in persistent prayer against the spiritual stronghold.

A Word About Those with Same-Sex Attraction or Gender Confusion

Many of the prayer points relate to LGBTQ+ activists or people who experience same sex attraction or gender confusion. These men and women are not embracing God’s intended design for His creation. However, before addressing this brokenness, we must prayerfully

examine our own hearts to make sure we are responding in love and care and that we see how other forms of sensualism may have a deeper hold in our own hearts than we know. Many who experience same sex attraction or gender confusion are caught up in a current even as they are being used to empower it.

Format

Each day will have a scripture, a brief meditation and a suggested prayer. Often the prayers include suggestions on practical follow-ups or research that should be done to pray more knowledgeably and specifically.

Some of the scriptures that serve as a reference for each day are challenging scriptures. Let us not let a difficult scripture dissuade us from continuing in prayer. God loves us and is mighty to change our hearts and the hearts of those we pray for. If a scripture is hard or awkward, talk to God about it.

Many of us are not familiar with spiritual warfare. Press through the warfare and remain present to the Holy Spirit. As we pray and obey, the Holy Spirit will show us how to be more effective.

Day 1. Repentance for Our Own Submission to Sensualism

Ephesians 5:3-4 But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality... nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.

Before we proceed on any other prayers against the spiritual stronghold of sensualism, let us repent of the ways we have ourselves submitted to it. For many of us, if we are honest, we do not live up to the standard of “not even a hint of sexual immorality” and we find ourselves drawn more than we would like to admit to the worldview of sensualism, as might be reflected in what we read, what we watch, what we think about or our browser history. We are conflicted. But God is eager to help us when we repent and help us turn our hearts to him. And God can forgive our conflicted hearts in a moment, so we should not despair that our own sin makes our prayers ineffective.

Our Father in heaven, we acknowledge our guilt before you. We have not guarded our eyes and ears and mouth as you have commanded. We want to be your holy people, and we have indulged in sexual immorality. It is a lie that our sexual immorality is not as bad as that of others, and we repent. Help us to not be like the pharisee who gave thanks that he was not like other people, and help us to pray like the tax collector who pleaded with you to have mercy. Thank you that the sacrifice of Jesus covers all our sins and you empower us to follow your law. Give us your wisdom to recognize where there are hints of sexual immorality in our own lives. Give us grace to repent quickly and replace our immorality with thanksgiving.

Day 2. Eyes to See Bondage

2 Peter 2:18-19a For they mouth empty, boastful words and, by appealing to the lustful desires of the flesh, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error. They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity.

Those who are caught in sins of sensual passion are in bondage. Many think they are free, but scripture makes it clear that they are in fact slaves.

Our Father in heaven, give us eyes to see that sexual immorality and sensualism is bondage. (Take time to pray for those God brings to mind, yourself, friends and family, colleagues, political, business or entertainment leaders, asking that God would give eyes to see the bondage of sensualism.)

Help me to shine your light, with truth and love, on the bondage of sensual sin.

Day 3.Church as a Vulnerable, Healing Community

James 5:16b Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.

Jer 32:39 I will give them singleness of heart and action, so that they will always fear me and that all will then go well for them and for their children after them.

Sexual sin quickly becomes sexual addiction, and scripture provides a clear guideline for breaking addiction. Confess your sins to each other. Vulnerability and community are principles in breaking addiction which have been validated repeatedly by psychological studies.

Sadly, it seems that all too often our churches are filled with people who want to look good, and our cover up cuts off both vulnerability and community. When this happens, the church is not a safe place to have sexual addictions confessed, wept over, prayed over and healed, a process that usually takes longer than we would think. Much less is the church seen as a safe place for someone experiencing same sex attraction or gender confusion who may even be convinced that there is nothing wrong with their inclinations. God's kindness leads us to repentance (Romans 2:4), and the church is to be the hands and feet of Jesus to show that kindness to those who need to repent.

Our Father in heaven, thank you for your kindness that leads us to repentance. Thank you for your unfailing love. Forgive us for our pretenses which prevent our homes and churches and communities from being vulnerable places where sins can be confessed and healing received. Grow kindness in our hearts that leads others to repentance. Give me a deeper knowledge of your love for me, and a knowledge of your love for ____ (use specific names of people you know who may be struggling with some form of sexual addiction). Help me to be quick to share what you have done for me, including messy details as needed, so I can be part of creating a vulnerable community where those struggling with sexual addiction can find healing.

Day 4. Capturing the Depth of God's Good Plan for Sex

Isaiah 5:22 Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.

1 Cor 1:18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

In many public forums in our culture, the language around LGBTQ+ matters is black and white. This makes it seem that if you want to discuss more deeply or question the morality of sexual behaviors, you will be castigated as being judgmental, “homophobic” or unloving. It is easy to just agree with these simple cultural mandates and keep our mouths shut. It is more difficult to communicate a more nuanced, yet richer sense of love, wanting the best for someone, wanting them to find true freedom of who God created them to be, and living in freedom within God's design.

While the public discourse seems black and white, if we engage someone experiencing same sex attraction or gender confusion on a personal level, with love, seeking to listen and understand, we might be surprised how open to nuance they are. So, in the public and private spheres, let's keep engaging, seeking to hear and understand, but also teaching God's plan for sexuality.

Our Father in heaven, we pray that your church would be diligent in declaring good what you call good. Give us words to communicate the richness of your love and your plan for those who experience same sex attraction and gender confusion. Would you raise Jesus-following writers, scientists, poets, filmmakers and artists who address these matters in a holistic loving way. Would we develop compelling social and cultural reference points that align with your good purposes. Give all of us courage to speak up, publicly and privately, on your good designs for sexuality and the beautiful gift of gender and complementarity in marriage. Give us persistence to keep speaking even when we are misunderstood or judged or seen as foolish, knowing that the message of

the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Day 5. Lie that Sex is a Purely Private Matter

Revelation 22:17 The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let the one who hears say, "Come!" Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life.

A wedding is a public, joyous event. Sex is private, but one of the reasons people rejoice at a wedding is that sex is an amazingly delightful gift of God. At a wedding we celebrate that a new family, a new building block of society, is being created, and this couple will get to enjoy this amazing gift. The nuptial bed therefore, is not only private, but also one which is celebrated and blessed at a wedding because it reflects the reality of God's amazing gift.

Let us pray against the lie that says that sex is a private matter and if it doesn't "hurt" anyone else, there's no problem. Sex between a married man and woman is like glue that builds the marriage relationship, serves as the basis for children and family.

Our Father in heaven, we pray that the church would reclaim the truth of sex as a joyous gift in marriage. [Pray for families and marriages of those close to you, colleagues, friends, family, fellow church-attenders, even and especially those who do not yet call Jesus Lord.] Help us to support marriages and keep us diligent in praying for them. We pray for wisdom and courage to speak up in defense of marriage and to lovingly warn against sexual immorality.

Day 6. Self-Control

2 Timothy 3:1-5 But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people (emphasis added).

So much energy in advertising and business seems focus on the customer's pleasure. Customers seeking pleasure is assumed. As a society, we seem to have little practice in self-control, and there are few voices advocating for it. The voices that do advocate self-control are often restricted to exercise or better eating (nothing inherently wrong with these), but with the focus on a more attractive body, even these can be a back door to increasing our focus on sensual things. It is no surprise, then, that the call to sexual chastity finds so few hearers, as chastity requires much self-control.

Our Father in heaven, we confess that all too often we resemble the sensualist people of the last days described in 2 Timothy. Help us to not be lovers of self and worshipers of self, money and pleasure, but to be self-controlled and submitted to you. Let the example of your church being joyfully submitted to you be a compelling example to the world. Pour out the fruit of the spirit of self-control on me, on my church, and on the global church. Give us wisdom, grace and strength to disciple those in our lives in the discipline of self-control.

Day 7. Pray for Enemies' Blessing

Matthew 5:44-45 But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

Let us not be naive in this spiritual battle. We have enemies. Millions are blinded by the lies of sensualism, and there are leaders of the movement who strategically plan how to advance the cause - to perpetuate the promise of "freedom" to indulge in sensual pleasures, while we know it is only slavery. Advancing the cause often means that the body of Christ is specifically targeted for holding to biblical principles of morality.

This does not mean that anyone who finds themselves in sexual sin, same sex attraction or gender confusion are enemies. Many struggle with their inclinations and actively fight against them, while others have fought against their inclinations for years with no success and concluded that the lie that this is just the way they are is true and have given up. Let's pray that these find deliverance from their bondage. But there is another category of people who are actively advocating for more sexual "freedom" and who actively are demonizing those who hold to the biblical definition of marriage and sexual purity and try to silence any voice that promotes a biblical view of chastity.

Jesus tells us to love our enemies and pray for them. In preparation for this prayer, please take some time for prayerful research. Learn the name or names of local LGBTQ+ activists, the editor of a local newspaper for the LGBTQ+ community, the leader of a local pride movement, or learn more about a celebrity or politician who you know promotes the LGBTQ+ cause or demonizes biblical sexual purity. Now let's pray blessing for them.

Our Father in heaven, thank you for your unfailing love for all of us sinners. Thank you that there is no one who is beyond your reach. Would you bless ____ (insert name(s) from your research). Please make them

hungry for what only you can provide. Please bring them into true, authentic, Christ-centered vulnerable community and challenge their stereotypes of what a Jesus follower is. Please provide for their needs. Please bring them joy, and where there is something in their life that blocks the joy that you want for them, let it trouble them so that they seek for the truth and find true freedom.

Day 8. Pray for Frustration of Enemies' Efforts

Psalm 54:3, 5a Arrogant foes are attacking me; ruthless people are trying to kill me—people without regard for God... Let evil recoil on those who slander me;

Psalm 18:34 He trains my hands for battle; my arms can bend a bow of bronze.

In our last reflection we discussed that there are real enemies in this spiritual battle, and, following the command of Jesus, we prayed blessing on them. Today we will distinguish between the enemy as a person and their efforts. Let's pray that God would frustrate the efforts of the activists of sensualism, even as we continue to pray that God would bless the individuals. We can't stand by silently when enemies are actively calling evil what the Lord calls good. And we can't be silent when godly leaders and the body of Christ are specifically targeted.

What efforts are we praying against? Any effort that promotes the lie that sex may be enjoyed outside of marriage between one man and one woman.

Where we might be uncertain as to how to pray against our enemies' efforts, as many of us are not accustomed in praying this way, let us pray using Psalm 18:34. As God did for the psalmist, ask that God would train our hands for battle and give us strength to bend a bow of bronze. The battle is spiritual, but in the physical realm that battle is likely fought with words, so let's ask God for victory in the spiritual realm, and wisdom in what to say and how and when we say it so that we are effective in the physical realm.

Continue to learn more about activists in your area. Read their bios and writings and follow them on social media. Be aware of what they are saying and continue to pray for their personal blessing, but let's also pray that God would frustrate efforts to promote lies about sexual morality.

Our Father in heaven, thank you that you are the final judge, that you always judge rightly, and you will judge every wicked deed. Thank you for your mercy to all of us sinners, and we continue to pray that ____ would repent of their ways. Please frustrate the efforts of ____ as they entice others by sensual passions and lead them into false freedom. Frustrate their finances. If there are evil or illegal practices in their organizations, expose them. May they stumble over their words and may their hearers and readers see through the lies and become disinterested in the message. Where they attack your body of Christ, would you cause the attacks to recoil on them.

Day 9. Keep Our Hearts Soft

2 Kings 22 *Josiah, the boy king, son of one of the most wicked kings of Judah, finds the Book of the Law while restoring the temple. When he hears the words of the Book of the Law read, he tears his robes, and sends someone to a prophetess to inquire of the Lord because (v13)* “Great is the Lord’s anger that burns against us because those who have gone before us have not obeyed the words of this book; they have not acted in accordance with all that is written there concerning us.” *The prophetess responds, (v 16, 18-19) ‘this is what the Lord says: I am going to bring disaster on this place and its people, according to everything written in the book the king of Judah has read.’ Tell the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the Lord, ‘This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says concerning the words you heard: Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before the Lord when you heard what I have spoken against this place and its people—that they would become a curse and be laid waste—and because you tore your robes and wept in my presence, I also have heard you, declares the Lord.*

Josiah wept and tore his clothes over the evil deeds of those who had gone before him. In response, God holds back his hand of judgement for a generation. We have been surrounded by so much sensualism, and it seems to get worse with each decade, so that we are tempted to forget that it is wrong and fail to keep our hearts tender over the change.

Our Father in heaven, your way is perfect and we harm ourselves when we stray from your law. So much damage has been done and it is hard to keep our hearts tender. We are sometimes tempted to just agree that everyone should do what is right in their own eyes. Please give us tender and contrite hearts. Make us willing to feel the pain you feel over souls you love being led astray. Let us not be discouraged and let us not lose heart.

Day 10. Being a Responsible Watchman

Ezekiel 33:7-8 Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the people of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me. When I say to the wicked, 'You wicked person, you will surely die,' and you do not speak out to dissuade them from their ways, that wicked person will die for their sin, and I will hold you accountable for their blood.

Ephesians 5:11 Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.

This is perhaps the most challenging prayer point for our conclusion, as we must consider how to responsibly carry the message forward. Those who see harm or judgement coming and keep silent shall be held accountable. Those who know a cure for a great harm and don't share it are accountable. Sensualism is a real, powerful and cunning foe, with many enslaved to its service, but our God is more powerful and more cunning and he uses us to bring change and healing and deliverance.

THIS IS NOT LICENSE TO TELL PEOPLE STRUGGLING WITH SAME SEX ATTRACTION OR GENDER CONFUSION THAT THEY ARE GOING TO HELL. Many, perhaps most, have already heard that message in some form or another and for many it has driven them further away from the saving power of God. We must *dissuade* those struggling with *any kind of sexual immorality or confusion* from continuing in their sin. Love, community and vulnerability seem to be the most effective ways to dissuade, while angry judgmental words are likely to just push one away. As faithful watchmen, we have an obligation to dissuade effectively and lovingly.

Our Father in heaven, your charge to us to act as watchman and expose the fruitless deeds of darkness, and the consequences of failing at our post are heavy. Give us grace and wisdom and courage to give loving warnings, to create vulnerable communities, to provide places where sins may be confessed and people may be prayed for and healed.