

If you experience same-sex attraction, know that God loves you. There is a place for you in His kingdom.



SAME-SEX ATTRACTION: You Belong

FOR ANYONE WHO experiences same-sex attraction, you may wonder if you fit in within the Church, or even if God's plan of happiness applies to you.

Your feelings may seem to be at odds with a lot of expectations. You may wonder: "Why is this happening to me? Does God really love me? Is there a place for me in His kingdom?"

1. God Loves You

The first thing to know is that your Heavenly Father loves you. God's love is perfect, enduring, and awe-inspiring. And He loves you individually. He knows your name.

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, then-Second Counselor in the First Presidency, taught:

"God does not look on the outward appearance. I believe that He doesn't care one bit if we live in a castle or a cottage, if we are handsome or homely, if we are famous or forgotten. Though we are incomplete, God loves us completely. Though we are imperfect, He loves us perfectly. Though we may feel lost and without compass, God's love encompasses us completely.

"He loves us because He is filled with an infinite measure of holy, pure, and indescribable love. We are important to God not because of our résumé but because we are His children. He loves every one of us" ("The Love of God," Oct. 2009 general conference [*Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2009, 22–23]).

"God loves all of us. He loves those of different faiths and those without any faith. He loves those who suffer. He loves the rich and poor alike. He loves people of every race and culture, the married or single, and those who experience same-sex attraction" (ChurchofJesusChrist.org/topics/gay).

2. You Belong

We are all different in one way or another. We have different races, ethnicities,

backgrounds, and cultures. Some of us were born in the Church; others are recent converts. And some experience same-sex attraction, while others do not.

We all belong. The ancient Apostle Peter taught, "God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34–35). He meant that everyone who strives to keep the commandments will receive His blessings, no matter their background.

Elder L. Whitney Clayton, emeritus member of the Seventy, taught: "I now speak directly to Church members who experience same-sex attraction. . . . We want you to know we love you. You are welcome. We want you to be part of our congregations. You have great talents and abilities to offer God's kingdom on earth, and we recognize the many valuable contributions you make" (ChurchofJesusChrist.org/topics/gay).

3. Turn to God—He Will Help You

Even though we don't always have the answers as to why things happen in our lives, we do know that Heavenly Father knows what you are going through. And because of the Atonement of His Son, Jesus Christ, all of God's children can find grace, be blessed, and return to Him.

So if you experience same-sex attraction, what do you do now?

Here's what helped one young adult as she realized she experiences same-sex attraction:

"I made the decision from the very beginning to invite God into every step of my journey, and that has been a spiritual experience for me.

"I can't predict what my life will look like in 20 years. I can't perfectly envision my eternal potential, and I rarely know what comfort or direction I need, but God knows all of those things. I don't know how I would have made it through the past few years without His help.

"The simple things—prayer, scripture study, temple and church attendance—really do make a difference. They have been an anchor in my life now more than ever. Heavenly Father knows me better than I know myself, so there is no need to hide from Him. I ask Him for help and trust that He wants my happiness even more than I do. I also try to let others know when I need a hug or a reminder that they love me. I have learned that I never need to shoulder my burdens alone."

Laura F., Utah

4. You Can Find Peace

Heavenly Father wants you to find peace and happiness. He wants you to love yourself and to find joy in your mortal journey. And He will be there with you every step of the way—even at times when you feel like you don't belong. You belong to Him—and you always will. 🙏

For more information, go to ChurchofJesusChrist.org/topics/gay.