

**PURSUING LIBERTY
UNDER CHRIST**
Truth Will Set You Free

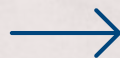
NEWSLETTER 2023

(For Internal Circulation Only)

Compassion without compromise

The past 3 years of pandemic have changed the world. It has also changed the way we do church and evangelism, but the TRUTH remains the same — through Christ we have eternal life and our Heavenly Father's heartbeat is that we grow into Christlikeness every day. As much as the pandemic impacted lives, the ideology of humanism continues to ambush the mindset of His children. The narrative that gender is no longer confined to male or female, and churches condoning same-sex marriages or same-sex union.

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If you are not aware, a growing number of governments around the world are considering whether to grant legal recognition to same-sex marriages. Currently, 30 countries have enacted national laws allowing gays and lesbians to marry, mostly in Europe and the Americas. The first country in Asia legalising same-sex marriage is Taiwan in 2019.

On 15 June 2022, Thailand took a step towards marriage equality as lawmakers gave initial approval to legalising same-sex unions. It is a significant landmark in this Buddhist-majority country with a highly visible LGBTQ community whose members still face major barriers and discrimination. The legislation must clear several more hurdles before becoming law and if it succeeds, Thailand would be the first country in Southeast Asia to recognise same sex unions.

Malaysia has been reported as a nation that decriminalised the LGBTQ with some programs to force the LGBTQ towards change.¹ So as Christians, how should we respond? How would you engage with those who ask you, “*Can they be gay and Christian*”? Are Malaysian churches ready to have conversations with the LGBTQ without prejudices and judgment?

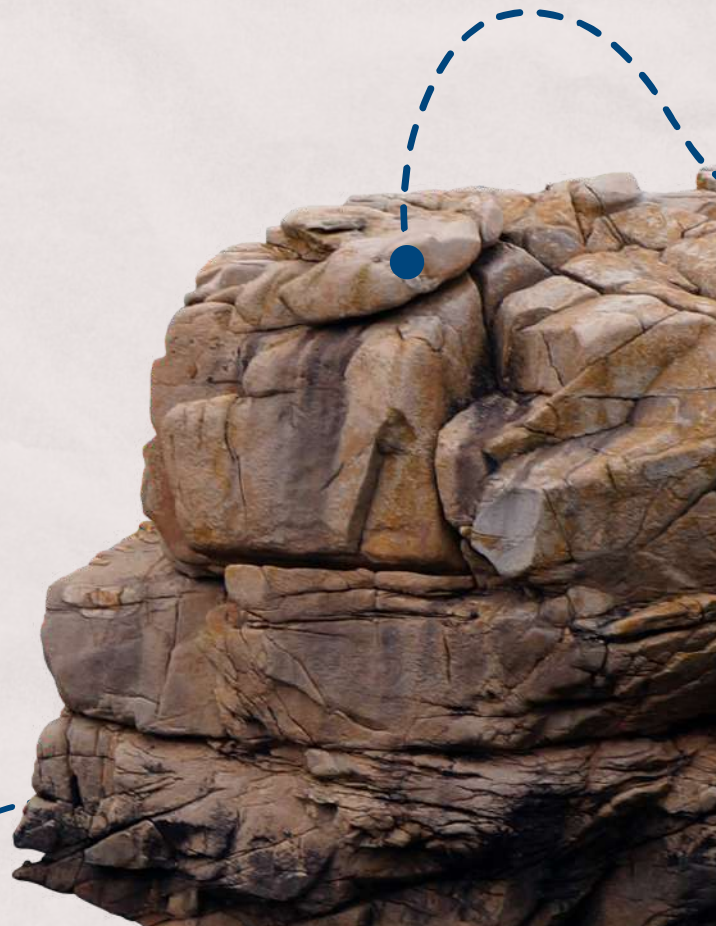
We are thankful for the partnership with Explain International last October to equip Christians on “**Can I be Christian and gay? A biblical perspective**”. There was a good turnout of people wanting to learn more about what the Bible says about human sexuality and how to make churches a safe space for individuals facing same-sex attraction. Pas. Samuel Nesan, the President of Explain International gave us an overview of human sexuality from Genesis to Revelation while Pas. Ian Toh from Truelove.is Singapore passionately asked churches to be a safe space for those who are seeking help. I shared my 20 years of experiences in journeying with the strugglers.

While Malaysia is seemingly unfriendly to the LGBTQ, churches can demonstrate the love of Christ by having compassion without compromise. Today, we are privileged to have more resources to equip our churches to engage with truth and grace. Let us not wait till we are confronted before taking the first step. May I encourage all of us to have the heart of Christ as the harvest (LGBTQ) are plentiful but the workers are few. May we respond to the Macedonia call.

PLUC believes that transformation is possible because of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit. We covet your prayers as we continue to journey with parents having children living the LGBTQ life as well as strugglers. Please do not hesitate to connect with us and our prayer is that we can be a blessing to Malaysia churches.

**His servant,
Rev. Tryphena Law**

1. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/08/10/malaysia-state-backed-discrimination-harms-lgbt-people>



Can I be Christian & gay?

A biblical perspective



The day was bright and warm in October 29, 2022 as the Subang Jaya Assembly of God welcomed some 300 participants for the **'Can I be Christian and Gay? A Biblical Perspective'** conference, hosted by Explain International (EI) and PLUC.

Following the conference opening address by Rev. Dr. Jeyakumar, bishop of the Methodist church in Malaysia, a three-part sharing commenced by Pastor Samuel Nesan, Pastor Ian Toh, and Pastor Tryphena Law. They provided perspectives from an apologist, a pastor, and a fellow journeyer. Pastor Mark Tan of EI took the role of a moderator across the sessions alongside a final question-and-answer session. Conducted with the utmost sensitivity, the overarching theme of the day was loving compassion intertwined with uncompromising truth.

The core message centred on the idea that it is not about us. It's about God, while we walk a fine line of showing love while not compromising on the truth. But what is the truth? Pastor Samuel Nesan tackled this topic with his sharing on **'Human Sexuality from Genesis to Revelations'**. There is an urgency for the church to be reflective to the LGBTQ movement, not reactive as it has been thus far. The command is that we contend for the faith, not to be contentious about the faith, meaning there's a difference between making an argument and being argumentative. Although he covered the 6 prohibitive passages referring specifically to homosexuality, Pastor Samuel emphasised the importance of viewing God's purpose for human sexuality as a whole. God created us to rule and be fruitful in multiplication, but sin tarnished our purpose.

The grace of God shown through Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, saved us from this sin and gave us a new identity, which we are to carry out through obedience. Since Jesus did not tolerate lust as in the Sermon on the Mount, claiming that he would be okay with us practicing homosexuality is illogical. God's intention for human sexuality will be completed at Christ's return.

What do we do about the truth? The narrative continued with Pastor Ian Toh's sharing on how the church could be made a safe place for Christians with same-sex attraction (SSA). In a survey he'd conducted, 2% of Christians in 24 churches identify as LGBT. Gender is being redefined, and so is gender identity and marriage. In times like this, it is important to go back to the basics. God is our compass, and the Gospel is our hope, he said, as he explained the importance of giving attention to our feelings, but not under its authority. God's definition of marriage is for 1 man and 1 woman to become one, forming a partnership to carry out a shared vision. Christ defines our identity. Pastor Ian asked a compelling question. *"How safe is it to come out in your church?"* We were asked to engage activists of the movement gently, to befriend moderates who support it but don't lobby, to help those who are struggling with SSA, and to find overcomers of SSA for testimonies. The testimonies, he elaborated, were important because culture is important, and it is shaped by powerful stories. A powerful reminder was that this isn't a political matter, but pastoral. The opportunity to make a difference starts here, from the churches, the leadership, the members. Everyone.



From church level to a personal story, Pastor Tryphena shared her own testimony as an overcomer in her talk on understanding and journeying with the same-sex attracted. One of her lines stuck out. *"It isn't us who can change anyone, but only God"*. She stressed the importance of being Bible-based, Christ-centred, and led by the Spirit of God. To approach from a position of curiosity and care, to pray for them to experience God's love. There's a difference between homo-emotional attachment, homosexual orientation, homosexual behaviour, and having a homosexual identity. Loneliness was a common theme of those she'd journeyed with, so building a relationship with them is essential, although 2 to 1 journeying is encouraged in case of overattachment. In all this, Pastor Tryphena cautioned us not to deny, distort, dilute, or belittle God's word.

As new light shone on this narrative, the conference attendees united in prayer for God to move, to touch lives, and to change lives impacted by sexual identity confusion for after all, we can only do so much in this field, and it is only God who can make all things possible, in His will and purposes.

Human Sexuality

from Genesis to Revelation



What does God say about human sexuality? At the **'Can I be Christian and Gay? A Biblical Perspective'** conference in October 2022, Pastor Samuel Nesan brought us on a journey through the Bible. He painted a picture of the role of human sexuality before the fall, after the fall, and how Jesus' coming fulfilled His purposes.

Human Sexuality before the Fall

In Genesis 1:26-28. God made man in His image, male and female, and He said to them, *"be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it."* Man was created in God's image, to have dominion over all creatures and we were created male and female, opposite in some ways, but with complementary natures. We hear what is both a blessing and command, to fill the earth and subdue it. Following that, Genesis 2:20-25 mentions, *"there was not found a helper fit for Adam, and he was put into a deep sleep while God created a woman."* And the famous line, *"bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh."* For man shall leave his father and mother, hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. *We get an overview of how women were created and what marriage is. The Greek word for 'one flesh' was also used in Deuteronomy to describe the triune God (compound unity) as well as for marriage.*

Humans were meant to reflect the image and glory of the triune God, to be fruitful in childbearing, and to rule over the earth.

The Fall

Pastor Samuel described a different view of human sexuality following the fall. A reversal of the command to rule occurred with the serpent influencing man to disobey God. It was an attack on God's Word, starting with the phrase *"Did God really say.."* Still, God promised a deliverer in Genesis 3:15, the *"seed of the Woman"*. But women have no 'seed' thus this could only point to virgin birth. Deliverance was to come through human sexuality. Adam called Eve the mother of all living, an expression of faith in God's plan. Parallels were drawn through God calling us to a new identity in Christ, when we are born again.

In the Old Testament, all major women of faith had problems with childbearing. Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, even Tamar who conceived through coupling with her father-in-law, Judah. All of which are mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus. In Exodus, when Pharaoh tried to kill the babies, God had a hand in Moses' survival. God was working supernaturally that Jesus could be born, despite opposition. We see how human sexuality took on a new meaning after the fall. **It was to have children for the purpose of the Messiah's coming, through which the world would be reconciled to God again.** Moving forward, in the covenant given at Mt Sinai, it was considered an abomination for man to lie with man. Pastor Samuel reasoned that the contempt is because homosexuality goes against God's idea of marriage or stands in the way of the Messiah.

In King David's time, in 2 Samuel, Jesus' coming was prophesied, that David's seed would reign on his throne forever. This was fulfilled in David's adultery with Bathsheba who begat Solomon. Jesus' line was riddled with sexual misconduct, incest, prostitution and so on. Proverbs warned us to watch for the wayward woman and sexual immorality. There was also Song of Songs, which points to the beauty of true marital sexual fulfilment. Ecclesiastes tells us that everything is meaningless for this ideal was not met. The prophet who married a whore, painted a picture of Israel as an adulterous wife. This would lead to the fulfilment of God's plan, in the fullness of time.

Jesus' Coming

Jesus had much to say on human sexuality. In the Sermon on the Mount, he intensified the Old Testament law. Even lust in the heart was adultery, and punishment for such was death. When the Pharisees asked if it was lawful to divorce in Matthew 19, Jesus pointed to Genesis 1, falling back to Scripture and the creation model of God. To Jesus, any sexual sin constitutes adultery, including homosexuality. When the apostles responded that it was better not to marry, Jesus recognised that it was a challenging topic. He talked about eunuchs who have been so from birth, made so by men, and eunuchs making themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. *"Let the one who is able to receive this receive it."* Pastor Samuel suggested the last depiction could apply to those who feel homosexual attraction but do not actualise it. They are the ones able to receive this (not being married).

Human Sexuality Post-Easter

Instead of Genesis 1, we look to the Great Commission for our purpose. The final line, *"and I will be with you always, to the end of the age"* is powerful. God kicked man out of His presence in Genesis, but reversed it. Jesus is our Emmanuel, and everything has taken on a new meaning.

We are called to go out and make disciples, and one of the key places for that is through Christian households, discipling our children. Marriage today is a typology of Christ and the church, as seen in Ephesians 5:30-32. The line *"of His flesh and of His bones"* is reminiscent of Adam's words in Genesis when he saw his bride. Jesus sees his bride in the church. Just as Adam slept, Jesus slept 3 days in the tomb. Just as Adam's side was pierced, so was Jesus'. We leave our father and mother to become one flesh with our partner. In John 3:16, God gave His Son to the church to become a mediator between man and God, forever. He gave His Son to be united to his bride, to become one flesh. And the church is one body in Christ. **This is the full purpose of human sexuality, summed up in the gospel itself.**

In the New Testament, we have 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 saying that the unrighteous do not inherit the Kingdom of God, among them being men who practice homosexuality. This tells us homosexuality is not a new struggle, but those who got involved were described as washed, sanctified, justified in Christ. Our primary identity is thus not in homosexuality but in Christ. The power of the gospel brings about a new identity. In Revelations 17, the Great Prostitute of Babylon is described to be drunk with the blood of the Saints but is defeated at the end, and the bride of Christ is clothed in white. God's intention for human sexuality will be completed at Christ's return.

Herein is a brief exposition of God's design of human sexuality and how it becomes beautiful in marriage, as we see the bigger picture of marriage between God and humanity. We being made in the image of Christ, our first call is to be faithful to God, whether in marriage or singleness. For those who worry about not being married, Pastor Samuel reminds us that the greatest marriage is of God and the church, to which we belong.



Being my Heavenly Father's son

I was brought up in a Christian family and my father worked full-time in the church. Growing up, I can remember that he spent most of his time in church and ministry work. At home, he seldom had any connection with me and the distance between us was palpable. Over the years we often had guests stay over — sometimes members of the church, even strangers and I had to share my room.

During my teenage years, I had two sexual encounters with male guests that my father welcomed. That really messed up my sexuality.

Throughout my teenage and young working adult years I did many things I was not proud of. I was into pornography and cyber sex. The more I entertained my fleshly desires, the deeper I fell into sin. I even had sex with a total stranger I met on an app. I was battling with myself, knowing my actions were wrong yet unable to break out of it. However, there came a point that I felt the need to bring my sin to light, and I reached out to PLUC to receive pastoral counselling.

Through counselling, I realised the lack of relationship and affirmation from my father led to me seeking wrong relationships with other males. I saw that I lived in a lie that I was born with same-sex attraction and change was not possible. My distorted view of masculinity caused me to struggle with being a man. To me, there was nothing attractive about being a man. I saw men as being disconnected from his family, boastful, shallow, lustful, and disrespectful. Yet, God showed me that I am a man created in His image and that my masculinity is beautiful with a unique role to play. I am called to lead, take up responsibility, create, protect, and speak out.

Before I dated my wife, I told her about my past so that she could decide whether or not to continue our relationship with someone like me. She told me she loved me for who I am now, not my past. Today, we are happily married and blessed with a son.

When my wife was pregnant, I was afraid that I couldn't be a good father due to the relationship with my father. Yet, becoming a father was what gave me a greater insight of how the heavenly Father views me. I will be there to comfort my son when he cries. When he is sick and in pain, that hurts me too. Sometimes he falls down, I need to bite my lip and allow him to get up by himself. When he doesn't return my kisses, I still love him. I know that is how my heavenly Father views me too. He feels my hurts, understands my struggles, yet allows me to choose my way but has His arms wide open whenever I run to Him.

On this journey of fatherhood, I am being fathered by my heavenly Father, and at the same learning how to be my heavenly Father's son.





What does it mean about being a Daughter of God

For the longest time in my life, I wanted to be a man to protect my family and loved ones. Everything that I do, think, wear, and speak mirrors a typical tough and macho man from the television and movies. My mother frowned upon my choices of clothing and to appease her, I would wear a dress on the 1st day of Chinese New Year. For 364 days, I will be back in menswear as I felt more comfortable and in control compared to wearing female clothes.

My choice of manly dressing and behaviour continued when I got into same-sex relationships. I was convinced that I am indeed a man trapped in a woman's body and I thought of getting gender reassignment surgery when I have the financial means.

Looking back perhaps it is God's grace and mercy that my former employer questioned my thoughts on the surgery and he stopped me from doing so. Being a cis-gender man, he said it is a tough life in this dog-eat-dog's world, and should I proceed with my choice of being a trans-man, it could be even harder for me to live my life.

Then I went into depression during the tumultuous relationship with my partner and I questioned myself very hard about my choice to live as a man. I left my former church and went to another church to hide from my manly identity. Though I believe God has been calling me to return to Him through messages on the pulpit, I resisted His call several times because I doubted that He would accept me again because of my great sin.

I met Jesus Christ in a very intimate encounter during a church event in 2017. He showed me in a vision that I am His precious daughter and again, He reaffirmed that identity in an inner healing session. I distinctly heard the Holy Spirit whisper in my heart as I was holding the holy communion cup and bread: "This is My covenant with you that you are forever My precious daughter, and I am forever Your Heavenly Father". I cried buckets when one of the counsellors prayed for Father God to re-father, restore and reaffirm me as His daughter. I have never felt so loved by Father God as my own biological father who has always been missing in my life when I was younger.

I began to ask Father God to show me how to live as His daughter after so many years of me living like a man. I started reading the Bible and the Holy Spirit showed me women of God who can be as capable as a man and yet remain feminine: Deborah, Ruth, Esther, Mary, Lydia among others. The Holy Spirit reminded me that these women in the Bible didn't need to be a man to live out their lives when they have faith and hope in God. All these women showed me that I can be serving God as a war commander, working in the field, or doing business successfully as a woman of God without resorting to becoming a man (physically and/or mentally). What I needed was to fully embrace my identity as Father God's precious child and daughter and He will show me how to do it.

I am grateful to Father God for sending me a group of godly men and women to journey with me. I began to keep my hair a little longer and chose to dress more femininely. I learned to tone down my voice, be aware of my body language and my choice of words. In the past I would do everything on my own, now I can ask and accept help and support from male friends for challenging physical tasks e.g. carrying a heavy table or climbing ladder and from female friends when I can't do certain things alone. Praise God for these godly friends; they will be there to point out and remind me of my identity as the daughter of God when I veer off the path.

Years passed and I still prefer to wear pants and t-shirts over dresses or skirts, and I still do not know how to apply make-up. Some friends asked me about the possibility of me getting a godly man and being married, and I replied I would choose to stay celibate for Christ for now. I believe my Father God is more concerned about my heart's desire and my life to be holy and pure for Him than my outer appearance or getting married. I pray I will continue to be faithful to Jesus Christ and perhaps one day, I will be fully transformed by the Holy Spirit into a wonderful woman that He has planned for me from the beginning of time: God's precious daughter.



My 14 months with PLUC



I thank God for how He worked in my life throughout the 14 months with PLUC. It was truly a divine appointment from God. I am grateful to both Rev. Tryphena and Pastor Sylvia for investing in my life with patience and love. I want to express my gratitude to all PLUC volunteers for their kindness and I enjoy serving with all of them.

As a newbie, I was excited about what I could give yet I was deeply humbled by the reality that I can never outgive God. Being young and full of energy, I was passionate about “restoring the world back to God’s original intention”. I wanted to become a super-servant of God. I am grateful to be reminded that PLUC is not about becoming an activist but how we balance between truth and grace in the ministry of journeying with strugglers. This has helped me today in ministering to others.

While serving at PLUC, I received a precious gift from the Lord, which is healing. God is concerned about my being more than my doing. I had to face my own brokenness as I was journeying with the strugglers. I was uncomfortable with touches, and was unable to say “No”.

I am thankful for having had a safe place to share these pain with my leaders. They showed empathy and gave me space to express.

They listened to me, walked with me, prayed for me, and encouraged me to seek professional help to overcome my fear of being touched. I am still walking through the process, and I can say that I am in a better state now.

In PLUC, I was reminded that Jesus is our boss, so in whatever I do, I do it for God. God is comical as He knew I often wrote a narrative for myself that I needed to perform and excel, otherwise I am good for nothing, and thus wallowed in guilt. Although I saw myself as a burden to PLUC for my terrible work, God's grace came in place of the negative thoughts I had. As I asked God to forgive me for seeing myself less than how He saw me, tears rolled down my cheek as I experienced a sense of freedom from above.

Though my chapter in PLUC has come to a pause, His mission and call for me, including the heartbeat for the strugglers remains the same. I want to be the church that provides a safe place for everyone, to love without compromising truth, to support our brothers and sisters who are struggling. I pray that God will continue to mould me and use me for His kingdom. May God continue to bless the work of PLUC.

Jeah En

Throwback 2022



Mega Subang Chinese Methodist Church



COGS Sandakan

Throwback 2022



Cambodia



**Arrows
International
School**



**Bible
College of
Malaysia**

WHO ARE WE?

Pursuing Liberty Under Christ (PLUC) is a Christian ministry that seeks to relate to, advocate for and educate on individuals struggling with same-sex attraction.

3 FOLD MISSION



Relate (Restoration)

We **RELATE** with strugglers in their brokenness and respect each individual's determination to see their personal dignity and sexual identity in God restored.



Advocate (Awareness)

In our awareness initiatives, we **ADVOCATE** an inclusive and safe environment for strugglers to develop self-awareness and foster healthy relationships.



Educate (Enlightenment)

We **EDUCATE** the truth behind Same-Sex Attraction, and **HOW** communities can provide support for those who struggle with same-sex attraction.

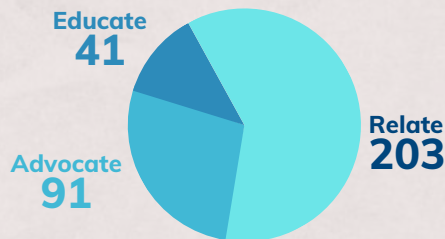
HOW CAN WE HELP?

WE OFFER:

- Individually-tailored pastoral sessions for strugglers and their families as needed.
- Support Groups to facilitate self-discovery, personal growth and offering a safe environment to foster new and healthy relationships.
- Talks, seminars, and workshops to educate schools, churches, organizations and communities on understanding and supporting strugglers and their families.
- Resources and materials on same-sex attraction and spiritual wholeness.

PLUC 2022 NUMBERS

We have
reached
7286
people



We welcome your partnership with PLUC in the following areas:

- Training, Seminar, Workshop (As Hosts & Volunteers)
- People-helper (Pastoral Care & Counseling)
- E-newsletter (Subscription)
- Prayer Support (Whatsapp Prayer Room)
- Giving/ Pledges (PLUC is a faith-based ministry)

If you are facing gender-related issues and seeking help, or if you are interested to volunteer with PLUC, please contact us at:

- +603-78873501 / +6012-5083501 (Helpline)
(Working Hours: Tue-Sat, 9:00am-5:00pm)
- help@pluc.org.my
- www.pluc.org.my
- P.O.Box 8513, Pejabat Pos Kelana Jaya,
46791 Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia.



SCAN ME

We welcome your partnership with PLUC as we are a faith-based ministry:

Your investment in our ministry can be done via bank transfer:
Public Bank Berhad | Account no: **3133229425**
Cheques are to be crossed and made payable to **PLUC Events Sdn. Bhd.**
If you require a receipt, kindly WhatsApp
+6012 508 3501 or email help@pluc.org.my
the banking details.



PLUC EVENTS SDN BHD

Thank you for your valued partnership and support